

THE INDEPENDENT

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NEWS SECTION

Final warning for David Lloyd

SIX PAGES OF SPORT

BROADSHEET REVIEW



The mall that ate a city

COVER STORY



All the dope from Howard Marks

COMMENT, FEATURES, ARTS, SECRETARIAL & FINANCE

And finally, this really is the end for News at Ten

THE BIGGEST row in television news for decades is expected to break out this week when ITV launches a campaign to abolish News at Ten.

Insiders say the network is poised to tell the Independent Television Commission (ITC) the existing 5.40pm early evening news will be replaced by a half-hour 6.30pm bulletin, and that News at Ten will dis-

BY JANE ROBINS
Media Correspondent

appear, ending a 31-year run for the flagship programme.

ITC approval is needed before the move can go ahead, and experts say the outcome is far from certain. Consequently, ITV has been dreaming up a way of convincing the regulator that it is not simply devising a

schedule to win audience ratings with extra movies where news used to be. It is expected to propose, as a substitute, a half-hour news programme, starting at 11pm, which would include plenty of regional items.

A backlash is expected as soon as the proposal is made public. The bulletin's founder, Sir Alastair Burnet, has expressed his dismay at the ending of a na-

tional institution, and ITN's political editor, Michael Brunson, has made clear he is a firm supporter of the 10pm slot.

The veteran reporter Sandy Gall is also in the frontline of resistance to a move that is perceived by many at ITN - which makes News at Ten - as an "evil plan". Politicians will also have much to say. Labour's Gerald Kaufman, chairman of the Cul-

ture and Media Select Committee, is firmly opposed to the idea. Originally, ITV had hoped to make an announcement about its proposed new 60 Minutes weekly current affairs programme at the same time as scrapping News at Ten. A new current affairs programme, it was hoped, would help convince the ITC that the network was not "turning fluffy" - par-

ticularly important since only a few months ago the regulator criticised the number of "docu-soaps" in the schedules.

But the 60 Minutes project has been dogged by controversy of its own. Granada is a front-runner to make the 60m a year series, but the situation has been complicated by allegations of nepotism. ITV's boss David Liddiment is ex-Grana-

da, and its controller of news and current affairs, Steve Anderson, is not only ex-Granada, but is also the brother of Jeff Anderson, the designated series editor. The row means it is unlikely that a 60 Minutes decision can now be tied to the News at Ten announcement.

At the Edinburgh International Television Festival last week, the subject caused almost

palpable tension. When Mr Liddiment was questioned about it he remained tight-lipped and maintained that "doing nothing" was still an option.

"There's a lot of anger at ITN," said one insider. "This decision will mean that we have ceased to be competitive with the BBC on news."

Leading article, Review, page 3

Adams says the violence is finished

A DECLARATION by the Sinn Féin president, Gerry Adams, that violence should be "over, done with and gone" was welcomed by the British and Irish governments yesterday as a significant development in the Irish peace process.

Mr Adams said that his party believed violence must be a thing of the past. Within minutes of the statement being issued, Downing Street hailed the words as being both significant and welcome.

Tony Blair's official spokesman said the statement confirmed the Prime Minister's view that Sinn Féin's commitment to peaceful means deserved to be taken seriously.

But there was a more cautious reaction from David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader and First Minister of Northern Ireland, who said that carefully crafted words were not enough. The weapons of terrorism must be destroyed and all forms of paramilitary violence must cease for good.

The Sinn Féin move was seen as a response to an intensive period of diplomacy and negotiation involving the British and Irish governments and Washington. The United States has been pressing for significant concessions from both Mr Adams and Mr Trimble in the run-up to Thursday's visit of President Bill Clinton to Northern Ireland.

Washington's clear concern has been to press all sides for flexibility and movement so that the presidential visit can be associated with progress in the peace process.

Mr Adams' statement was issued on the eve of the emergency recall of the British and Irish parliaments today to pass new anti-terrorist laws after the Omagh bombing.

In the statement, Mr Adams said everyone must work politically to make sure the

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

"appalling" Omagh bombing, carried out by the Real IRA, was "the last violent incident in our country".

He pledged: "Sinn Féin is committed to exclusively peaceful and democratic means to achieve a way forward... There is a shared responsibility to removing the causes and to achieving an end to all conflict. Sinn Féin believe the vio-

lence we have seen must be for all of us now a thing of the past, over, done with and gone."

The carefully choreographed Downing Street reaction to the Sinn Féin statement indicates that activity behind the scenes ahead of President Clinton's visit has been intense.

Mr Trimble has several times pressed for a republican declaration that "the war is over" in addition to the long-standing Unionist demands for IRA arms decommissioning.

While Sinn Féin has not used

the exact words pressed for by Mr Trimble, it has come close to doing so. This is seen as significant by the Government, which had already been impressed by the swift and unequivocal condemnation of the Omagh bombing by Mr Adams.

Elements in Mr Trimble's party are clearly most unhappy at the idea of his leading a new Northern Ireland executive, expected to include members of Sinn Féin. Some of his back-benchers have been pressing for republican concessions to sweeten this pill.

The SDLP leader, John Hume, said he saw the Sinn Féin statement as another way of saying that the war was over. And Northern Ireland deputy first minister Seamus Mallon, also of the SDLP, said the statement could be built upon.

Before Mr Adams' surprise statement, all attention had been focused on the draft anti-terror legislation, published for MPs to study before they debate and vote on it today. Some Labour MPs voiced doubts about the wisdom of introducing it so quickly and about the implications of the measures.

Mr Blair will open the proceedings with a statement on Omagh and his assessment of the state of the peace process.

One of the most controversial provisions of the Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Bill is that it will enable someone to be convicted of belonging to a banned group largely on the evidence of a senior police officer backed by only limited supporting evidence.

But Robin Corbett, a Labour member of the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "From all I know about it at the moment, I am extremely worried and very unlikely to help the Government to go down a wrong road that's dreadfully mistaken."



Bill Clinton (left) getting to grips with Boris Yeltsin before their discussions in Moscow, at which the Russian leadership assured the US that the Kremlin remained committed to economic reform, although 'tactical adjustments' might be needed. Sergei Karpukhin

Clinton begs Russia not to abandon free market

BILL Clinton personally pleaded with Russia yesterday to put its house in order to avoid reverting to the Soviet past and to maintain the painful transition to market economies.

His appeal came during a summit in Moscow at which President Boris Yeltsin pledged not to reverse reforms, after a week in which the Russian crisis has seen falling global markets, a withering rouble and sharp price rises.

The temperature in the stand-off between the Kremlin and the State Duma, or lower house, rose when Mr Yeltsin "insisted" it confirm Viktor

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

Chernomyrdin as prime minister. On Monday the Duma overwhelmingly rejected him. Yesterday Mr Yeltsin, asked if he would dissolve parliament, replied, with a grin: "If it behaves itself, no."

He told Russia it was "suffering ... millions in losses" every day that it was without a prime minister and Cabinet. But this failed to move leaders of the Communist-dominated Duma, most of whom say they will again reject Mr Chernomyrdin at a second hearing

on Monday, pushing the confrontation to a third and final vote. If he fails a final time, parliament will be dissolved.

The Russian leadership, anxious to continue to qualify for the next instalment of a \$230m (£140m) Western "rescue package", emphasised commitment to reforms. "The country will follow the path of creating a market economy and democratic society," a statement said. But Mr Yeltsin also told Mr Clinton that Russia might need to make "tactical adjustments" and enlarge the state's role in the economy to help it weather the crisis.

Bank chief warns of global 'credit crunch'

MARTIN TAYLOR, chief executive of Barclays Bank, warned yesterday that the world was heading for a "credit crunch" as a result of Russia's financial crisis.

The warning came after Barclays shocked the City with the disclosure that the bank had lost £335m in the Russian debacle. Mr Taylor said the fact that a big nation had defaulted on its obligations would

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

create shockwaves around the globe. He said the natural reaction of banks after the crisis would be to rein back on lending at a time when large swaths of the world economy are already in depression.

He said Japanese and Asian banks were no longer lending to the rest of the world, and if

banks in the US and Europe were to follow suit, the outlook would be bleak. "The prospects for the world economy are materially worse than they were four weeks ago," said Mr Taylor. "It is dangerous nonsense to say that Russia's economy is no bigger than Luxembourg's and in any case it is ring-fenced from the rest of the world."

Barclays' disclosure caught the City completely by sur-

prise. Although some of the large American banks and hedge funds were known to be taking big bets on Russia's reformers getting their way, British banks have consistently maintained that their exposure to Russia was minimal.

Over the past few days, some of the big American banks have disclosed losses of up to \$500m - in some cases wiping out their entire profits

from elsewhere in the world. Bankers in Moscow have been sent on enforced leave as their employers weigh up whether to cut their losses and pull out of Russia altogether.

Other UK high street banks moved quickly to calm market fears that they too had suffered big hits. National Westminster, Lloyds-TSB, and HSBC, parent company of Midland and First Direct, have all described

their lending to Russia as "minimal" in comparison.

Elsewhere in the world, stock markets paused for breath yesterday after nearly two weeks of savage falls. After slumping 6 per cent on Monday, Wall Street bounced back with 150 points in early trading.

Apocalypse or correction? page 3
Banks lose millions, page 14

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INSIDE
FULL CONTENTS
PAGE 2
TODAY'S TV
REVIEW, PAGE 22

HOME
Female and teenage drug abusers are to be targeted in a new multi-million pound prevention strategy
PAGE 4

FOREIGN
Norwegians doubt their Prime Minister - on sick leave for depression - is up to the job
PAGE 11

BUSINESS
Scottish Hydro-Electric and Southern Electric announced plans to merge in a £4.7bn deal
PAGE 15

SPORT
England's cricket coach may face the sack over "inappropriate" remarks about Sri Lanka's spinner
PAGE 24

36
9 770951 546535

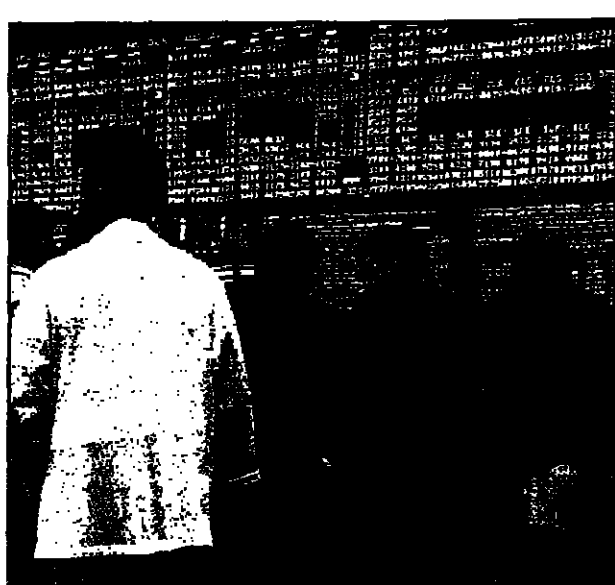
JAVICO LTD



LONDON Investors enjoyed a strong run in the post-election euphoria but shares have fallen 11 per cent this summer



FRANKFURT German shares fell yesterday, adding to woes on a market that has lost 20 per cent since July



NEW YORK Monday's plunge wiped out all the year's gains



RIO DE JANEIRO Brazil, the hope of Latin America, has fallen 35 per cent in two months



TOKYO The Japanese stock market, down 15 percent since July, has suffered from the fall-out from the Asian crisis



RIO DE JANEIRO Brazil, the hope of Latin America, has fallen 35 per cent in two months

Apocalypse or economic correction? A calming guide for nervous citizens

IT NOW looks odds-on that there will be a global recession over the next two to three years. But that does not mean that there will necessarily be a worldwide economic catastrophe. Some countries, including this one, look in pretty good shape to pull through rather better than we came through the early 1990s version that we all remember so well.

At the moment about one third of the world economy is in recession or depression: nearly all of East Asia, patches of Latin America, Russia of course, and even some bits of Europe such as Italy. But until a few weeks ago the financial markets had managed to shrug off these concerns and shares were hitting new highs. Their message was that while one third of the world might be in trouble the other two thirds would be fine.

In the past week two things have happened to change this benign outlook. One is the deteriorating situation in Russia; the other is Wall Street's own loss of nerve.

The Russian crisis ought not to have much direct impact on the West, for it is not a particularly big economy. Its output is about the size of Spain's. It does not buy much of the money to do so. But what has happened is alarming because Russia remains a nuclear power and because it is one more bit of bad news on top of others. Banks that have lent to Russian companies have added to their losses on loans to East Asia. It is this cumulative nature of the world's economic troubles that has upset everyone and indirectly led to Wall Street's wobbles.

Wall Street matters because high share prices have been the thing sustaining the long Amer-



HAMISH MCRAE

ican boom. People in the US, to a far greater extent than here, keep their savings in some form of stock market account - maybe in shares or unit trusts, but more and more in an account that looks like a bank or building society account but is actually invested on the stock exchange. When share prices fall, the balance on the account, which had been steadily rising, suddenly falls. Everyone feels poorer, and may well cut their spending as a result.

Britons worry about share prices, insofar as they do think about them, because they might affect the value of their pension. Americans worry about them because it affects

whether they feel they can afford to buy the new car. We all remember that recessions happen, because many of us are still smarting from the effects of the last one. Only in the past couple of months have house prices risen enough to clear most cases of negative equity. In the US the recession was less serious, and the memory correspondingly dimmer.

But markets are different animals from the real economy. What we all want to know is whether the market wobbles are signalling economic wobbles to come. What does all this mean for us?

The best guide to the future is the past. No one can have more than the dimmest outline of the shape of the world economy over the next economic cycle, but we do know that a cycle exists. It would be nice if it didn't - if we somehow knew how to smooth out the humps and the troughs, but we don't. It seems to be embedded in human nature that we get carried away with enthusiasm when things are going well and have a fit of the glooms when they are going badly. So peering into the future entails trying to

guess how the next cycle might compare with past ones.

Think world first, then narrow it down to Britain. For some places in the world this one is already the worst in living memory. The present recession is the first serious one in Hong Kong since the Second World War, and looks like being the worst for Japan since then too. But that does not mean it will be the worst for everyone. Both Hong Kong and Japan had mad speculative booms - Hong Kong in the 1990s, Japan in the late 1980s - which were bound to end in tears. North America and Western Europe haven't had anything like that, though anyone who has been in the US much this year will have noticed a sense of the boom.

Think about Britain and compare with, say, the early 1970s when inflation was soaring and house prices could double in a year, or the late 1980s, when again house prices shot up by 25 per cent in a few months. It hasn't been like that now. Apply the simple rule that the bigger they come the harder they fall and the coming fall ought not to be as serious as the previous ones: the boom has not been so big, so the slump should also be more limited. It is possible we may come through the next three or four years with merely a period of very slow growth, not the actual recession that many fear. In previous cycles we have tended to do rather worse than the US or continental Europe: it is perfectly possible that this time we may do better. We cannot, however, assume that. So the wise will prepare. How?

Everyone's situation is different. Some of us are in secure (or at least secure-ish) jobs. Some are not. Some of us are working in growth industries,

while others in parts of the economy which always head down when recession hits. Because no downturn is a carbon copy of the previous ones, it is impossible to say that, for example, the housing sector will be the one which is more severely hit. At the moment manufacturing is suffering because of the strong pound, but many manufacturers will come through in decent shape, perhaps because they have some product which is not very price

sensitive, or because they just happen to be particularly good at what they are doing.

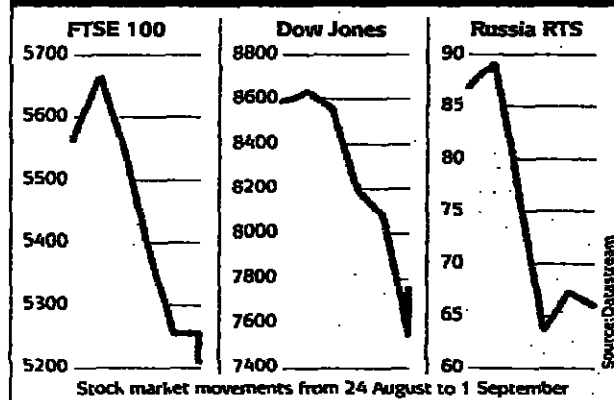
If there is a general rule, it is that people should try to be particularly cautious about borrowing more than they can afford. That was the prime lesson of the last recession and it holds good now. Recessions have an economic purpose: they weed out the weaker companies and help the stronger ones. As a result, and at the cost of misery for some, the whole

economy becomes more efficient. Individuals who have over-borrowed are hit by the same weeding out process that is forcing companies to lift their game. That is particularly true this time, as it seems most unlikely that inflation will run to the rescue of the those who have borrowed big. The reverse may happen: we may be moving into a world where prices, instead of rising, tend to fall.

But there is still time. The

economy is still growing, albeit more slowly. The companies whose shares have fallen are still the same companies they were three months ago. We still need and enjoy the goods and services a modern economy produces. Some ordinary people have time to sort out their finances. And market economies, for all their shortcomings, have proved time and time again that they are good at adjusting to new and more difficult times.

ROUGH WEEK FOR SHARES



There's plenty of room on the window ledges of Main Street

KAREN THEIS pauses on her way to work in downtown Minneapolis yesterday for a cup of coffee outside the Brit Pub on Nicollet Avenue. Sharing the bench with flowers and other tributes left there in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, she digests the giant headline on her paper - "DOW PLUNGES". Karen has more than a passing interest. It is not just that she works in a retail stock brokerage where, of course, things "went crazy" during Wall Street's nosedive on Monday, but she herself belongs to the armies of ordinary Americans who in recent years have made their first forays into the equity market. And, like so many others, she has done very well by it. Until now, that is. Ms Theis, 41, reckons she is down by about \$10,000 com-

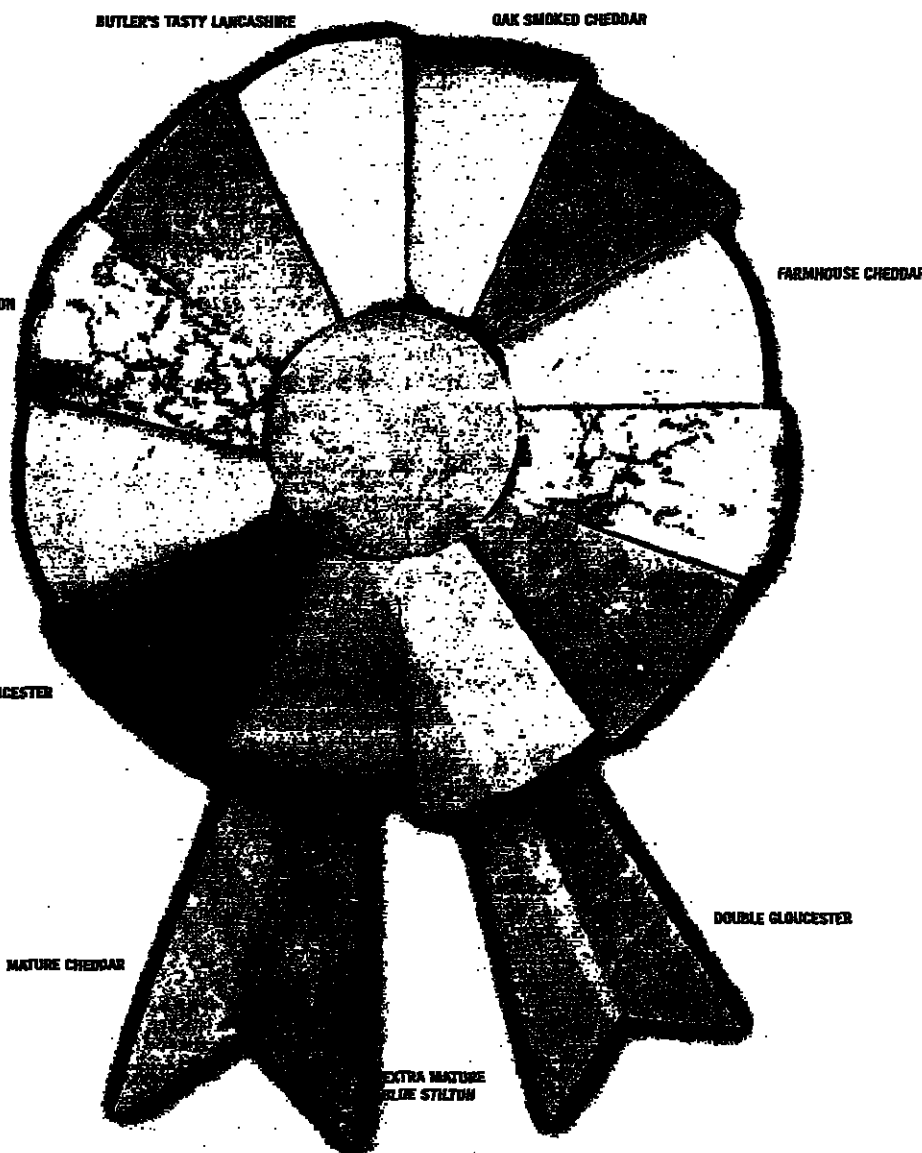
pared with a week ago. But here is the funny thing: she is neither in despair nor is she panicking. Indeed even as she has watched the numbers rocket south she has done nothing at all except watch and sigh. "You know what, I don't mind, because it wasn't really my money in the first place," she concedes. "It was just paper money."

Whether it is paralysis in the face of a crisis or just good old mid-western phlegm, Ms Theis is far from alone in her reaction. Multiple interviews with holders of stocks and mutual funds in this city yesterday told almost exactly the same story: so far investors are holding their breath and staying calm. And one or two are even

taking advantage of the swoon to buy a few stocks. It is confirmed by Richard Bowler, the manager of a downtown branch of America's leading discount brokerage, Charles Schwab. "We are getting a flood of calls, but mostly it's people wanting to know what's going on. For the most part they are sitting tight," he said. The reason, he adds, seems to be this: people are clear that they are in the market for the long term and many expected this kind of downturn. Indeed, for Ms Theis, the gains had begun to seem too good to be true. "I couldn't really believe that the market had got that high in the first place. If you get up to highs like those, you have to expect it to come down too."

Bruce Finne, a government worker from Illinois in town for

a conference, is unfazed even though his losses amount to a "multiple of my annual salary". But he, too, has sold nothing. "I'm in this for the long run. If the market takes a year or three years to come back, that's OK," he says. At Schwab's, customers are coming in at a trickle not a stampede. Mostly, they are curious about buying, not selling. "You could say, I've done a bit more than nibble," says Roger Silberman, as he leaves the brokerage after buying stock in the Norwest banking group. "When there is blood on the street, it is time to buy." Doesn't he worry that the bottom of the market may be still to be come? No, he says, because the domestic economy is still sound. "The bad news," he insists, "it's been overdone."



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JAVICO 1350

Unions demand working-class MPs

TRADE UNIONS could be given a greater say over the selection of MPs under plans drawn up by the Labour Party to fend off claims that it has abandoned "working-class" candidates.

The move to allow individual unions to have their own selection panels will be put before next month's party conference in an attempt to head off criticism that Labour is being dominated by middle-class professionals.

It follows the announcement by the engineering union, the AEEU, yesterday that it had set

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

up a £1m fighting fund to help get more working-class people into parliament.

The Tory opposition seized on the plans as evidence that Labour had still failed to shrug off the shackles of its union paymasters.

Labour intends to overhaul its parliamentary selection procedures completely at next month's party conference, creating panels approved by the National Executive Commit-

tee (NEC) to vet and interview candidates.

Left-wingers were worried that an approved list of candidates selected centrally would be a ploy to elect New Labour professionals and "luvvies", but the party confirmed to *The Independent* that unions would have a major role.

A Labour Party spokesman said: "We do want more working-class MPs and that is precisely why this measure is being proposed."

"It will be possible for an individual union to organise its

working class a. of, pertaining to, or characteristic of the working class or classes. working class(es) the class or classes consisting of the people who are (normally) employed for wages, esp. in manual or industrial work; the proletariat. working girl (cf)

'Working class', as defined in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary

own pre-endorsed selection panel, as long as it follows our procedures."

A three or four-member panel would select candidates who would go before local parties for

a one-member one-vote ballot. The NEC would then have only to rubber-stamp the union-endorsed candidates. Unions would also retain their right to put nominations to local parties.

The AEEU decided to put £1m into training working-class candidates after research from Aberdeen University showed that only 13 per cent of the 418 serving Labour MPs have a background of manual work - the lowest proportion in the party's history.

The AEEU claims that its criticism has particular resonance as it has been a strong backer of New Labour, contributing £2m to help the party win office last year.

Ken Jackson, the general secretary of the union, said

that the campaign was all about making sure there were still MPs who knew what life was like on the shopfloor.

"It was the AEEU that fought vigorously to bring Labour back in touch with ordinary working people," he said.

"Our fear is that a small minority, by preventing working people from representing New Labour, may leave them behind once again. That would be bad news for the Labour Party."

However, the move to give unions their own selection pan-

els was welcomed, Mr Jackson said.

An AEEU senior officer said: "Any move from the Labour Party to increase the number of working people in parliament ... would be welcome."

John Redwood, the Tory trade and industry spokesman, said: "We have been told for several years that Labour is no longer in thrall to the unions. This proves that no matter what they say, by their actions they are planning to give even greater control over their affairs to the unions."

'An era not to be ignored'

BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

JOE ASHTON, staunch defender of the working classes, said Labour MPs like him were now "dinosaurs from another era".

A former apprentice engineer on a factory floor in Sheffield, Mr Ashton (Lab., Bassetlaw) welcomed the AEEU's decision to help parliamentary candidates from working class backgrounds.

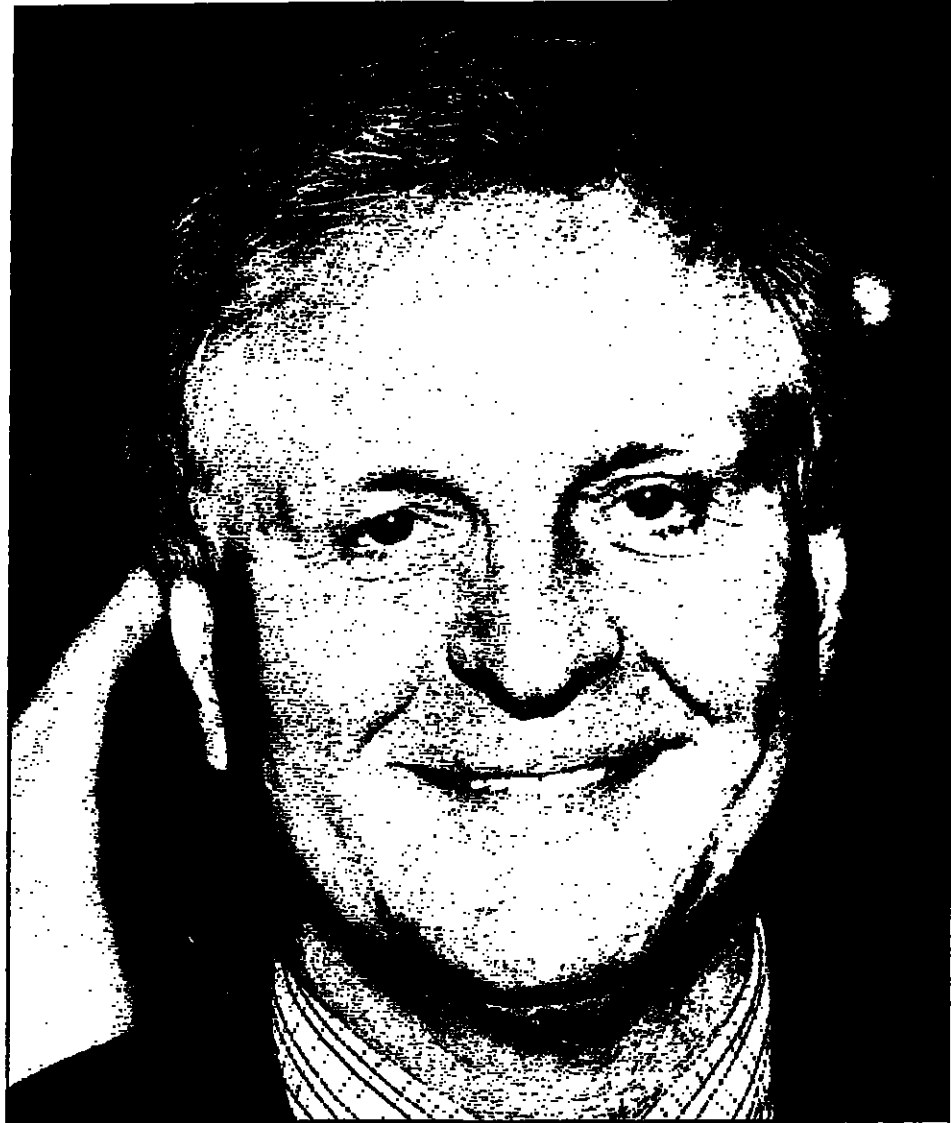
"It is not that I want to put down the abilities of younger MPs, but having done a night shift in the freezing cold in somewhere like Tyneside would help them to speak out on behalf of workers," the 64-year-old MP said.

"A lot of the new intake of MPs went to university and never worked as carpenters, toolmakers or engineers before they were selected for their seats," he added.

"It is my generation, and I am over 60, who can understand one end of the lathe from another, who really are the voice in the wilderness for manufacturing."

He was first elected for his seat, centred in a mining area in 1968, ironically beating the then director general of Jaguar, Geoffrey Robinson.

Now holding the office of Paymaster General, Mr Robin-



Joe Ashton: Young MPs haven't done a night shift in the cold Victor Patterson

son's multi-million fortune and his opera-singing wife, Marie Elena Giorgio, have been described as the ultimate credentials for New Labour "luvvies".

While Mr Ashton refused to

be drawn on his local party's choice 30 years ago, he added: "I believe that my own experience helped to convince local people to vote for me."

The son of a steel smelter and a school cleaner, Mr Ash-

ton left grammar school at 15 to work on the shop-floor building tanks for the Korean War.

He joined the Labour Party at 16 and served on Sheffield City Council from 1962 before his election to Parliament.

'Surely we all deserve a voice'

BY SARAH SCHAEFER

THE SELECTION process for Swindon North's prospective parliamentary candidate at the last general election was regarded as the classic cut-throat battle between Old and New Labour.

Competing were Jim D'Avila, a union-backed, home-grown toolmaker, and Michael Willis, a London-based television producer and former adviser to the then Shadow Chancellor, Gordon Brown.

After the process was stalled by court action prompted by allegations of ballot-rigging, the party's National Executive Committee finally selected Mr Willis as a candidate. Mr Willis later won the safe seat.

So it comes as no surprise that Mr D'Avila, 47, hailed the AEEU's £1m fighting fund as essential aid for people with his background in the selection process. "It will help tremendously because the leadership has their favourites who will get fast-track promotions while whispering campaigns against local activists are conducted at the same time," he said.

Mr D'Avila left his comprehensive school at 16 to join the Swindon Rover factory as a toolmaker and soon became a member of AEEU. He has worked at the factory ever since.



Jim D'Avila outside the Rover plant at Swindon

Richard Wintle

"Parliament should represent the whole country... but, before the last election, most of the candidates selected were all middle class. Surely people with my class background deserve a voice too - particular-

ly in a party which has always been one-member-one-vote."

Mr D'Avila, now the constituency chairman of the North Swindon Labour Party, has been a councillor for 21 years. "I know what problems

workers on the shop-floor have and I have represented them for many years," he said.

"I campaigned against Clause Four and support Tony Blair - I am hardly from the Loony Left."

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Fight against drug abuse is given £217m boost

WOMEN, TEENAGERS and ethnic minorities are to be targeted in a multi-million pound strategy to prevent drug abuse announced yesterday.

The government initiative follows evidence that there are only enough treatment places to help one in every five problem drug takers.

Up to £50m will be spent in the next three years on providing local authorities and drug agencies with more treatment packages and funding to wean addicts off their habits.

The Department of Health will contact drug action teams throughout the country this month, asking them to concentrate more on helping drug takers among young people

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

under 25 - particularly those under 18 - women and ethnic minorities. Current treatment services tend to concentrate more on white men aged from 20 to 35. The move comes as new evidence shows that heroin dealers are targeting young men and women.

The shift in strategy was backed by research, also published yesterday, which found that every extra £1 spent on treating drug misuse saved more than £3 by cutting crime and the cost of prosecution and imprisonment.

The cash is part of a package of measures by the Govern-

ment, which is spending an additional £217m over three years on top of the £1.4bn spent last year tackling drug misuse. It will be used to shift the emphasis away from reacting to drug users, for instance by imprisoning offenders, towards greater efforts at prevention, through, for example, education and rehabilitation programmes.

An extra £10.5m is to be channelled into the 106 drug action teams working in England to tackle local problems. A further £133m is allocated for reducing drugs misuse in prisons. This will include the new drug treatment and testing orders, which can be used instead of jail for offenders who carry out crimes to fund their habits. Pilot projects

are being set up in Croydon, Liverpool and Gloucester.

An additional £3m will be spent on drug education and prevention programmes in schools and the community. Speaking at the launch of the strategy, Keith Hellawell, the United Kingdom drug co-ordinator - or "drugs tsar" - said education could "reduce the temptation" of drugs for young people.

The Standing Conference on Drug Abuse, an umbrella group for bodies working in the area of drug abuse, said the new figures were actually a major shift away from prevention and education in favour of treatment, with enforcement still taking more than 60 per cent of the total.

IN BRIEF

Nanny denies murdering baby

LOUISE SULLIVAN, an Australian-born nanny, yesterday denied murdering a six-month-old baby in her charge. At a pre-trial hearing at the Old Bailey she said "not guilty" when the charge, of murdering Caroline Jongen on 21 April, was put to her. The trial could be delayed until January. Caroline's parents, Marcel Jongen, and his wife, Muriel, who had employed Ms Sullivan for five years, were not in court. Ms Sullivan is on bail.

PC illegally traced ex-wife's lover

A CONSTABLE who used the police national computer to track down his ex-wife's new lover was fined £150 yesterday. Andrew Skorski, 31, admitted one charge of using personal data contrary to the Data Protection Act. He faces disciplinary proceedings from Gloucestershire Police, Bristol Crown Court heard. Matthew Jewell, for the prosecution, said Skorski gave the lover's car details to a colleague and asked her to trace the owner.

Kenyan adjourn Julie Ward case

A KENYAN magistrate yesterday adjourned until 25 October the preliminary hearing into the case against a game warden accused of killing British tourist Julie Ward 10 years ago. Simon de Makhall was arrested in July in connection with Ms Ward's death in the Masai Mara game reserve.

Camelot shuts out junior punters

A CRACKDOWN ON under-age gambling stopped more than a million youngsters from playing the National Lottery last year, Camelot has claimed after a survey of retailers. Last year Camelot dropped 30 retailers for under-age selling.

Blair attacked over Oasis party

THE HEAD of a government-funded anti-drug agency has resigned after claiming that Tony Blair gave young people the impression he tolerated drug abuse by inviting the Oasis star Noel Gallagher to Downing Street.

David Macauley also said the failure to prosecute the son of Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, for selling cannabis gave young people a "confused message".

Mr Macauley stood down in protest from his £40,000 a year post as the director of Scotland Against Drugs, which receives a £500,000 grant from the Scottish Office to develop community programmes.

He said he believed the decision to entertain Noel Gallagher, who argued that the taking of drugs was as normal as taking a cup of tea, at No10 was a mistake. "It's not just me criticising Tony Blair; the young people I talk to say they felt he was supporting drug taking. The Gallaghers are in their magazines and on the television

BY JASON BENNETTO

and that message is getting across," he said.

He added: "Noel Gallagher's PR people would never let him go on television and say things that were racist. We need to apply the same rules to drug abuse."

Mr Macauley also feels the treatment of William Straw, 17, who received a caution, was a symptom of Government-led confusion. "If you are caught drunk-driving in Ayr or Sauchie you know it's unacceptable and you'll get banned. If you're caught with a couple of joints, prosecution depends on where you are. It confuses the police and the public."

He added that he was angry at his organisation's budget being cut from £2m and having to deal with the Government's "confused message, if there is one at all" on drugs.

A Scottish Office spokesman said: "We always favour a broad approach when dealing with drug abuse."

7.81%

Jams in sky delay a third of all flights

BY LOUISE JURY

AIR PASSENGERS are suffering a "black year" for delays, according to figures released yesterday.

Late departures on major European flights in June were the worst for any month in nine years, the Association of European Airlines (AEA) said.

More than 20 per cent of its member airlines' scheduled flights were delayed by more than 15 minutes in the first half of this year.

This reached 29.1 per cent of departures in June, the worst monthly figure since 1989 and the second worst since records began nearly 20 years ago.

Karl-Heinz Neumeister, the secretary-general of the association, whose members provide about 90 per cent of European scheduled flights, said: "This year is turning out to be a black one for delays."

He said the late departures this year were a repeat of the crisis of 1989 when, at worst, more than 30 per cent of flights were being delayed.

In response, the associa-

tion, whose members include British Airways and British Midland, called for a single air traffic control system instead of the uncoordinated patchwork of national systems.

In some cases, for example, aircraft are passed from one country to another by telephone because the computer systems are not compatible.

But governments failed to respond to the plea and Mr Neumeister said this year's delays again showed what was needed was a pan-European body to enforce co-operation.

He added: "The big difference between 1988 and 1989 is that, while the earlier situation was rightly seen as intolerable, the current political reaction seems to vary from complacency to almost unbelievably self-congratulation."

Phil Evans, senior policy researcher for the Consumers' Association, said the problem was capacity. But, he said, everyone was running away from the question because of the difficulties in expanding existing airports without upsetting people living nearby.

"More of us want to fly but there has been no increase in capacity, in terms of runways or facilities," he said.

"The airlines don't want to talk about it. But there has got to be a debate, otherwise it's going to get worse and worse."

Mr Evans said air traffic controllers were reporting the system was already beyond its limits and the result was delays.

But, he added: "Some delays are legitimate, some aren't. Some are due to bad organisation and turn-around times."

A spokeswoman for British Midland said the company constantly reviewed turn-around times to ensure punctuality.

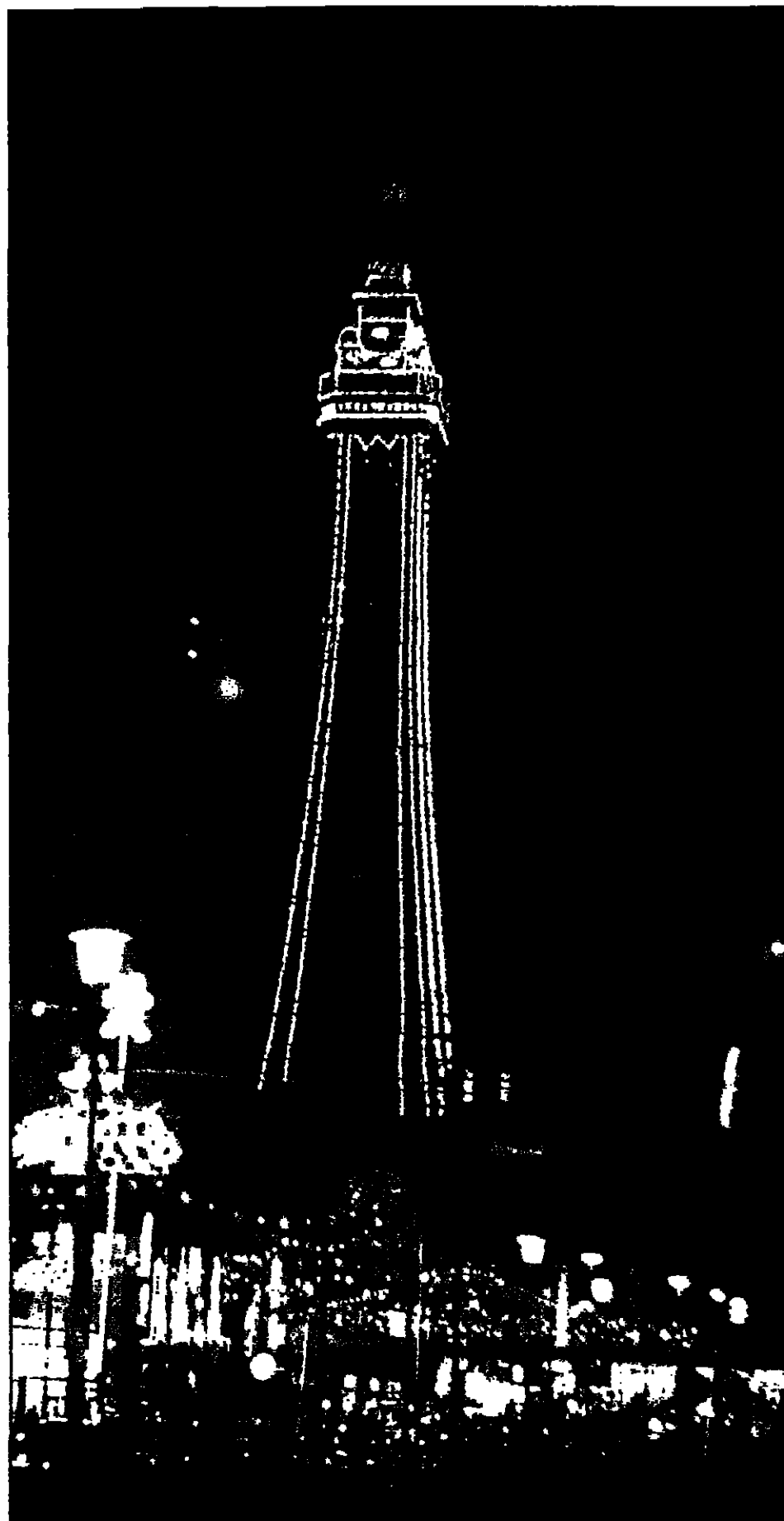
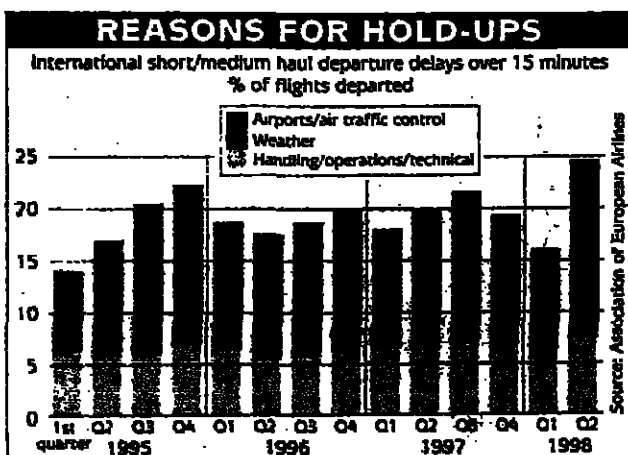
She said: "The major contributor is the fact that the south-east is among the most congested airspace in the world. Flying out of Heathrow is incredibly congested, but people are always going to want to travel from Heathrow because it is an airport close to the capital."

An Aer Lingus spokeswoman said it had outperformed the AEA average this year by 7 per cent and its punctuality in July was the best July performance since 1993.

A parliamentary select committee report earlier this summer on regional air services recommended provision of greater airport capacity in the south-east of England.

The committee also recommended more use of feeder/reliever airports and changes to runway operations to provide greater capacity in the south-east.

Opposition to plans for a fifth terminal at Heathrow has resulted in Britain's longest-running public inquiry. It began in 1995.



Blackpool Tower - one of Britain's top fee-paying attractions Raymond Williamson

Blackpool Tower sold in £74m deal

BLACKPOOL TOWER and several of Britain's most famous seaside piers were snapped up yesterday by the former Pontin's tycoon Trevor Hemmings in a £74m deal.

Leisure Parcs, a company controlled by Mr Hemmings, bought the resorts division of the entertainment giant First Leisure which also owned Blackpool's three piers and the Winter Gardens conference centre. As well as the attractions in Lancashire, Leisure Parcs has also bought piers at Eastbourne and Southsea on the south coast, and at Llandudno in north Wales.

Blackpool Tower, which was built over a century ago and is modelled on the Eiffel Tower in Paris, attracts more than a million visitors every year. It is one of Britain's 10 most popular fee-paying attractions.

The tower is a Grade I listed building and incorporates at its base a building containing attractions that include a world-famous ballroom and circus.

"It's business as usual today but it is too early to say what might happen in the future," a spokesman for the Tower said yesterday.

First Leisure's chairman, the former television executive, Michael Grade, announced that the resorts division was up for sale in April as part of a strategy of focusing on faster-growth leisure businesses such as bars, nightclubs and health and fitness centres.

Mr Hemmings, who is believed to have spent his childhood holidays in Blackpool, was quickly tipped as a front runner.

The former bricklayer, whose interests embrace hotels, pubs, a football team and racecourses, is now worth an estimated £315m.

He made almost £60m by building up the Pontin's holiday camp business and then selling

it to the brewer Scottish & Newcastle in 1988.

Mr Grade said yesterday: "The disposal is another major step towards strengthening the group's position in its core growth markets - nightclubs and bars, health and fitness and family entertainment - where the board believes there are significant opportunities to enhance shareholder value."

"The disposal will result

HIGH LIFE ON THE PROM

■ The 519ft high Blackpool tower was opened on 14 May 1894 when 30,000 people paid a 6d (2.5p) entrance fee.

■ Former Mayor Sir John Bickerstaffe got architects Maxwell and Tuke to emulate the Eiffel Tower. Its £42,000 cost was met by £1 shares being sold.

■ It is made from 2,500 tons of steel, 93 tons of cast iron and 5m bricks.

■ In the Second World War a US bomber missed it by inches and in 1956 it was closed for two years by fire.

■ It was painted gold for its centenary at a cost of £1m and the Queen and Prince Philip joined the party - 385 feet up on the observation platform.

■ 1.2m visit each year and locals call it The Stick.

in the loss of two months' profits during Blackpool's peak season.

Earlier this year, First Leisure sold off its bingo division to management for £38m. Mr Grade said the £12m proceeds from the two sales would be used to reduce the group's borrowings.

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Cancer test doctors 'being victimised'

ERRORS ARE inevitable when tissue taken from patients is checked for cancer, and the specialists who carry out the work are being judged too harshly, a hospital consultant argues today.

After a series of "scandals" involving allegedly misdiagnosed cancers, Dr Milena Lesna, consultant pathologist at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Dorset, says pathologists are being made into scapegoats and it is time that hospital managers and the public were told zero error is impossible.

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
AND ROGER DOBSON

In one year, 1995, 19 pathologists were suspended for alleged incompetence, but in 16 of the cases the allegations were proved unjustified at subsequent tribunals. However, only five of the pathologists have been reinstated. "Not guilty is not the same as innocent," Dr Lesna says in an article in the *Journal of Clinical Pathology*.

Investigations are often trig-

gered by personality clashes or hostility within a department. Female doctors were much less likely than men to get their jobs back, although they were more often found not guilty of any wrongdoing.

Bernard Charnley, consultant pathologist at the Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil, has been suspended on full pay of £50,000 a year for four years, and it could take another year before the issue is resolved. By that time, the total cost to the National Health Ser-

vice, including legal charges, could be more than £500,000.

Dr Charnley's problems began while he was on paternity leave when a complaint was made that he had inaccurately reported the results of cervical screening tests, an allegation he has consistently denied.

Colleagues say that the performance for the cytology service at the South Wales hospital was within national guidelines and above average. One said: "The tragedy is that he was performing well and is very con-

scientious and he is being pilloried when there are many people around the country with far worse figures who are still in post. It is very unfair."

A report on the case is due in the next couple of months from an independent panel of experts, which is currently sifting through the evidence. Depending on the result, there could be an appeal to the Secretary of State for Wales, which could take another year.

The Royal College of Pathologists has not defined what

error rate should be regarded as reasonable, making it difficult for pathologists to know where they stand. One study of 200 pathologists found that only one quarter claimed to have made no error in the previous five years. Diagnostic work is a team effort and pathologists rely on other doctors to supply a correctly taken tissue sample, backed by good clinical information, to make the diagnosis.

The royal college and the General Medical Council have set up a peer review system to

adjudicate on alleged errors but that is not enough, Dr Lesna states in her article. "Pathologists need to explain to the public that all diagnostic and screening errors carry a certain rate of error, and that accusations of professional incompetence only end up demoralising experienced staff who are often difficult to replace."

Professor Ian Lauder, vice-president of the Royal College, said the number of pathologists whose work had been identified as sub-standard was dispro-

portionate compared with other specialties. Most doctors buried their mistakes but the material that pathologists work with - tissue samples, cervical smears - remain on file for ever. "People will be able to come back in 100 years and see what mistakes I made," he said.

Professor Lauder said the college had been trying for some years to set up a study to assess what would be an acceptable error rate for pathologists but had been unable to raise the necessary funds.



Two lithographs of original drawings by John Lennon - (left) 'John and Yoko' (1969), and 'The First One' (1977); both are on show at the Gallery 27 exhibition which opened last night

From the erotic to domestic, John Lennon's private sketches finally find an audience

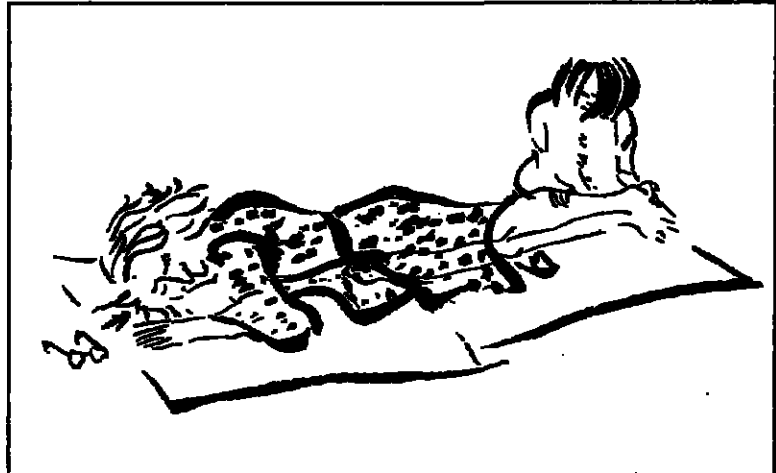
BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

INTIMATE - and on occasion too intimate - artworks by some of the best known musicians of the century went on show at a gallery yesterday. The exhibition included seven erotic lithographs by John Lennon.

Some of the artworks are on view for the first time in over two decades in this country. The lithographs, selling for £3,500 each, form part of the "Bag One" portfolio drawn by Lennon as a wedding gift to Yoko Ono. The collection was exhibited in London in January 1970, but was closed down on the second day by Scotland Yard, which confiscated the erotic sketches.

Also on display is a lithograph collection of song lyrics, "The Solo Years" and "The Beatles Years", priced at £1,500.

Alongside Lennon's love



'Karuzawa '77', by John Lennon, which is on show with works by other musicians, and (right) Lennon and Yoko Ono



in the same way he came at his music.

"He thought of them all as composition pieces and would work on his large canvases from several different directions. He would lay one out on the floor and work from top to bottom, and then turn it around."

Financially, the artworks by Lennon will be eclipsed by the price of another piece of Beatles memorabilia.

On 15 September at the Hard Rock Cafe in London, Sotheby's will auction the notebook of the late Mal Evans, the former Beatles road manager.

The notebook contains a draft lyric by Paul McCartney for "Hey Jude", and a reserve price of £150,000 has been put on it.

The draft contains lyrics that did not appear in the eventual song, such as the psychedelic line: "Bow down to the plasticine bananas."

Chinese restaurant fined record £30,000

A CHINESE restaurant in Peterborough has attracted a record fine of £30,000 after council officials found beer kegs and boxes of soft drinks standing in liquid sewage.

Environmental health officers who visited Denny's restaurant on Broadway in the city found workshops and equipment encrusted with food debris, lavatories opening into food rooms and doors blocked open.

In the cellar, a sewage pipe had become blocked and backed up so that drinks kept down there were standing in sewage sludge.

There had been no outbreak of food poisoning but Peterborough magistrates are thought to have taken a dim view of the way the premises had deteriorated since the last inspection six months previously. On that occasion some defects were noted in a warning letter to the

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

restaurant but they had not been put right.

The owner of the 100-seat restaurant, Sek Fat Cheng, pleaded guilty to nine charges under food-safety regulations. The restaurant remains open, although the blocked pipe has been repaired and other essential work carried out.

Council officials said they were staggered by size of the fine. Trevor Gibson, head of environmental and public protection, said: "We nearly fell off our chairs."

Arthur Cater, manager of Denny's, said he was considering appealing. "There have been some horrendous stories involving restaurants locally that were only fined £2,000 to £3,000... [the fine] is going to affect the business badly."

He said the problem was caused by a blocked drain in the street, but "environmental health officers took no excuses".

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health said the size of the fine was an indication of a new determination among magistrates to get tough over food safety. A spokesman said: "This kind of fine is the only effective deterrent."

There are an estimated 600,000 food businesses in Britain and about 1,000 prosecutions a year.

The number of prosecutions has fallen in recent years as the Government has encouraged a move to informal enforcement, using persuasion rather than threats.

The Institute spokesman said: "We welcome the informal approach but it has to be backed by the ultimate sanction of closure."

Genetic engineers create sugar that is not fattening

THE NEWS for slimmers just gets better and better. First there was Olestra, the fat that didn't make you fat, and now Dutch scientists have produced a sugar beet whose sugar tastes sweet but which the body cannot digest.

The result is a plant that efficiently makes a calorie-free sweetener known as a fructan, using genes taken from the Jerusalem artichoke. The first crop from a field trial of these transgenic plants will be harvested later this month.

The sugar industry is keenly interested in the new plants, but the companies involved have already put Dr Andries Koops, of the Centre for Plant Breeding and Reproduction Research in Wageningen, under a contractual gag on their names.

"I can't name them. But there are a number of patents

being filed for this," he told *The Independent*. If commercially successful, such plants could revolutionise dieting and farming.

The sugar beet crop provides half of the UK's sugar, amounting to hundreds of thousands of tons annually, and biotechnology companies are already spending millions of pounds to develop herbicide-resistant transgenic forms of the plant, to improve crop yields.

Early results from the Dutch field trial suggest that the genetically modified plants are as healthy as normal sugar beet plants, which store sucrose in an underground root to help them survive the winter.

However, they might be infertile, because the normal sugar beet plant uses its stored

sucrose to make seeds. The transgenic plant may lack the ability to turn its fructan store back into sugar, meaning the seeds are not viable.

That, though, could be an advantage in a commercial transgenic plant, since it would lower the chances of the gene crossing into wild species.

The modified plants contain a gene taken from the Jerusalem artichoke, which naturally turns the sucrose into fructans - indigestible forms of the fruit sugar fructose. Fructans taste sweet to the human palate. "We all have the enzymes to digest sucrose, which chemically is a disaccharide," said Professor Koops.

"But fructans are trisaccharides" - consisting of three sugar molecules linked together - "and we can't digest those. Only some of the bacteria in our colons might be able

to, and the results would be converted to fatty acids that would be dealt with by the liver."

The Dutch group's work, which has taken nine years, is reported this month in the science journal *Nature Biotechnology*.

"The system holds great promise for commercial exploitation," commented Professor Stef Smeekens of the University of Utrecht, who said that for "those with a sweet tooth, but a mind for their waistline" the work should be a cause for celebration.

However, Dr Koops is less interested by this breakthrough than by future possibilities from transgenic sugar beet. "This is just testing the concept," he said. "What we are really looking at is the possibilities of using plants to produce chemicals such as polymers to

order."

Managers at the Dounreay nuclear plant were yesterday ordered to "get tough on safety" after yet another damning report on operations at the north of Scotland site. Investigators sent into the 44-year-old installation found "many chronic safety problems", low morale and a failure of senior managers to even walk around the plant on a regular basis.

The team, headed by the Chief Inspector of Nuclear Installations, found organisational changes made within the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority over the past four years had "so weakened the management and technical base at Dounreay that it is not in a good position to tackle what is its principal mission - the decommissioning of the site".

The authority had hoped to resume reprocessing work at Dounreay - halted in 1996 after a leak - and privately believed its case was strengthened with the recent acceptance of weapons-grade material from Georgia.

But Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, made plain in response to the report that the ban on new commercial reprocessing work would continue. There would be no reprocessing of material already at Dounreay until all the points raised in the report had been dealt with.

"One thing is clear - Dounreay must get tough on safety," Mr Dewar said. He has asked the Health and Safety Executive, which published the scathing 150-page report, for an immediate briefing on how the faults can be put right.

Though Laurence Williams, the chief inspector, declared Dounreay "currently safe", his team's findings and the demand for a "culture change" are a severe embarrassment to the authority and its Dounreay management. The criticisms echo a 1997 report that showed the plant reaching crisis point, with areas overflowing with waste. Then, last July, the Commons Trade and Industry Committee condemned what it called a "culture of secrecy" pervading the various operations.

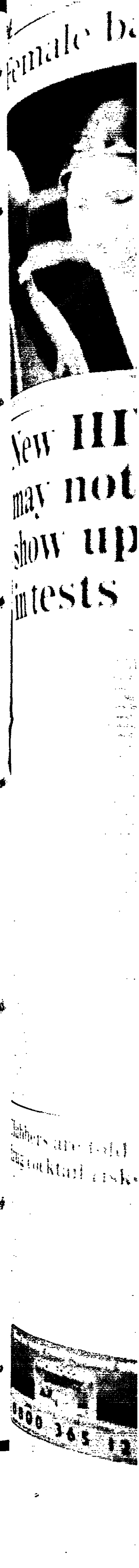
Mr Williams said the authority was "over-dependent" on contractors for the delivery of key functions and had failed to develop a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the various forms of radioactive waste at the site.

The report is highly critical over the "lack of progress" on decommissioning work at the Caithness plant, once Britain's centre for the development of fast-breeder reactor technology. In the past 10 years there had been virtually no work on a reactor shut down in 1977. About 1,000 fuel elements remain in the reactor but some are jammed and the authority has not yet developed a way of removing them.

The investigators said managers tended to be "self-referencing" and had accepted standards that would not have been accepted by the rest of the nuclear industry. According to staff, senior managers rarely walked around the plant on a regular basis.

Friends of the Earth Scotland saw the report as a vindication of its long-running campaign for a complete end to reprocessing and a switch to alternative ways of dealing with radioactive waste, notably dry storage.

Kevin Dunion, director of FoE Scotland, said: "Given the problems the executive has highlighted, it beggars belief that anyone should consider reprocessing as part of the decommissioning process."



Female bank manager found guilty of sex bias



Kathryn Dowse insisted Mr Gilbert should mop the floor of the bank. *News Team*

THE COUNTRY'S youngest female bank manager was found guilty of sex discrimination against one of her male employees, an industrial tribunal ruled yesterday.

Kathryn Dowse, 31, insisted that trainee Andrew Gilbert should mop the floor at the branch in a supermarket in Heywood, Greater Manchester, the tribunal had heard.

Mr Gilbert, 24, also said that Ms Dowse was "rude and patronising" towards him.

The tribunal in Manchester ruled that Mr Gilbert was the victim of sex discrimination by the Midland Bank, who sacked him after complaints by Ms Dowse before he had completed his probationary period.

The tribunal chairman, John Goodman, said: "The inference we draw on the evidence is that Kathryn Dowse perceived Mr Gilbert as a young, assertive man who posed some sort of threat to her authority as a relatively inexperienced, young, female manager."

"One illustration we find illuminating is her insistence on him participating in the mopping of the floor."

BY PETER BEAL

The tribunal ruled the bank had been "unreasonable and unfair" in the treatment of Mr Gilbert, of Handforth, Manchester, who now works as a theatre box office manager in Crewe, Cheshire.

They said he had been treated less favourably than the three other female employees at the branch, and the senior manager said to have authorised his dismissal had acted solely on information from Ms Dowse and made no attempt to speak to Mr Gilbert about her complaints.

Mr Goodman said in his ruling that the Midland Bank spoke in its literature of steps it took to prevent discrimination.

But he said: "No matter how pious and well intended those sentiments are, the employer must also take practical and active steps to ensure they are implemented."

"I can say quite emphatically we do not regard the conduct of the bank as indicative of taking such steps as were reasonably practical to avoid discrimination."



Andrew Gilbert celebrates his win with his mother, Stella McGuinness. *Chris Gleave*

New HIV may not show up in tests

AIDS RESEARCHERS are urging the Government to fund more work on analysing new strains of HIV in Britain as scientists revealed that a new type of virus has emerged that may go undetected by present blood tests.

French scientists have identified a new class of AIDS virus in a woman from Cameroon in West Africa. The virus does not belong to the two main types of HIV-1 and the researchers warn that it is likely to escape detection by existing HIV tests.

The Cameroon virus was detected by François Simon, a virologist at the Bichat Hospital in Paris, who found that it was so different to all other strains of HIV-1 that he had to classify it as belonging to a separate type.

AIDS scientists in Britain said they have tried to convince medical authorities to monitor the emergence of subtypes of HIV. The government's Public Health Laboratory Service in north London is responsible for monitoring the spread of HIV in Britain but it analyses only two new infections a month for subtype information.

Scientists at the PHLS warned two years ago that it was necessary to increase the sampling programme to 50 tests a month.

"Two a month is not giving us a wide enough picture. We should attempt to subtype as many as we can so we can say what's happening around the country," one PHLS scientist said in 1996.

A strain of HIV, called subtype E, has already appeared in Britain as a result of tourists be-

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

coming infected after visiting Thailand, where the E-subtype is responsible for an AIDS epidemic among heterosexuals.

Dr Andrew Leigh-Brown, head of the centre for HIV research at Edinburgh University, said that keeping track of different HIV subtypes would help to identify new routes of transmission between this country and abroad.

"I think this sort of research programme could be highly informative but it has been increasingly difficult to find financial support for this type of work," Dr Leigh-Brown said.

Some scientists believe that certain subtypes of HIV may exhibit different properties, which make them either more lethal or more easily transmitted. One study, for instance, found that subtype E of the virus may be more likely than other subtypes to be spread during heterosexual intercourse.

Dr Leigh-Brown said that whether this was the case was still a "very open question".

Dr Eddie Holmes, a research fellow at Oxford University who has studied HIV evolution, said that knowing the subtypes of HIV in the infected population can shed light on how the virus has spread.

"But our sampling is terrible. We are only scratching the surface and there may be many more subtypes that we are unaware of," he said.

"The question is, should we be concerned about the diversity of HIV and should there be more effort to sample it. The answer is, absolutely, yes."

Clubbers are told of drug cocktail risks

NIGHTCLUBBERS are at risk of developing "Saturday night fever" according to doctors at London's largest accident and emergency department.

The potentially dangerous syndrome is linked with the use of multiple stimulants - usually ecstasy combined with amphetamines, cocaine or other drugs. Over 15 months, St Thomas' Hospital treated 48 patients for ecstasy-related problems, more than half of whom had combined it with other drugs. Seven patients were ad-

BY JEREMY LAURANCE

mitted and six suffered serious complications of delirium, seizures and coma.

Dr Hugh Williams and colleagues, who published the findings in the *Journal of Accident and Emergency Medicine*, said over half the patients had taken the drugs while clubbing or at a rave. "The high percentage [suggests] adverse effects may occur more readily when ecstasy is used while dancing within a hot and crowded environment."

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Clinton tells Russia: stick to the rules

EPA

port to the man [Yeltsin] who has drunk himself to degradation, who is insulting the nation and the common sense of us all", he said. It is not what the Americans will want to hear.

Wall Street slump leaves the feel-good President exposed



Flowers' sentiments are echoed by "ordinary" Americans. A collapsing stock market could accelerate Mr Clinton's fall, but it is the gut instincts of Americans that will seal his fate.

THE ORIENT Express rolled into Istanbul to a red-carpet welcome after an 18-year absence. Some 120 passengers made the four-night journey from Paris at a cost of £2,800.

The Labor Party, led by Kim Beazley, has put forward a less radical tax reform plan that does not include a consumption tax. Sol Lebovic, the managing director of Newspoll, said yesterday that whoever wins the tax debate during the campaign will have the best chance of forming the next government.

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مجلسنا من اجل

Saudis secretly funding Taliban

BY ROBERT FISK
Middle East Correspondent

ON THE face of it, Nawaf Obaid's report looks like any other student thesis prepared for Harvard's John F Kennedy School of Government.

Entitled "Improving US Intelligence Analysis on the Saudi Arabian Decision Making Process", it might have mounded on the shelves of the State Department official who requested it.

But the young Saudi's detailed account of king's indecision, American ignorance and secret Saudi funding for the world's most ruthless Muslim militia has enraged his country's government, by revealing the kingdom's religious divisions and its secret support for the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Quoting Saudi government officials, army officers and members of the Saudi National Guard, Obaid, who toured the remote conservative villages of Saudi Arabia last year but is now staying in Geneva, concludes that "US analysts have underestimated, overlooked or misunderstood the nature, strength and goals of the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia, as well as the extent to which the secular leaders are beholden to this group".

Had US intelligence operatives "had a deeper understanding of the religious situation in Saudi Arabia", he says, they might have been able to prevent the 1996 bombing at Dhahran, which killed 19 Americans.

Until now, the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, now in Afghanistan, has been blamed for the bomb.

The first part of Obaid's thesis details the covert pressure of Saudi preachers on King Faisal to order an oil embargo against the United States after



his after Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait in 1990. "All the senior ulama were categorically against the idea," a court official is quoted as telling Obaid. "It was only after long discussions with the King ... that Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdul-Aziz Bin Baz reluctantly gave his endorsement to the idea on condition that solid proof be presented as to the [Iraqi] threat."

The King was persuaded to admit the US forces after a meeting of the Saudi High Command at which General Saleh el-Mahya, the army commander, talked of the "pitiful lack of uniformed men" in his forces and General Ahmad Beshery, the air force commander, said that, given the strength of Iraqi land forces, a Saudi air defence would be "futile".

US Defense Secretary Dick Cheney would later promise that US troops would not stay in Saudi Arabia "a minute longer than they were needed".

A meeting of 350 ulama at Mecca eventually agreed to the temporary US military presence.

But to appease the ulama, King Fahd was forced to make concessions, increasing the authority of the Mutaween, the religious police who impose the strictest laws of Wahhabism, a purist Islamic faith originally expounded by Mohamed bin Abdul Wahab, whose descendants are now the powerful al-Shaikh family. For Wahhabis, only the strictest Islamic law is valid, while unbelievers are infidels, deserving punishment.

This same religious police would later create the Taliban's Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Suppression of Vice, which has made Afghan women prisoners in their own homes.

In Saudi Arabia, Obaid says, the US underestimated the ulama's dissatisfaction when American troops stayed on.

Thus, the bombers who struck at US personnel, first in the capital, Riyadh, and then in Dhahran, "did not originate externally, but derived their theological and strategic underpinnings from the mainstream Wahhabi sect".

As resentment grew and Sheikh Salman al-Audah and Sheikh Safar al-Hawali demanded the withdrawal of US troops, Saudi security forces found that their followers tried to prevent their arrest.

According to a former interior ministry official, Obaid says, the region's governor, Prince Faisal bin Bandar, went to Riyadh "to seek ... assistance from the special forces of the

Ministry of Interior". US intelligence officers "should have recognised the significance ... that this 'extremist' group gained enormous popular support through propaganda that directly targeted US, French and British troops".

Obaid quotes a former senior Pakistani civil servant saying that in Afghanistan "the US provided the weapons and the know-how; the Saudis provided the funds, and we provided the training camps ... for the Islamic Legions in the early 1980s and then for the Taliban."

The Saudis and the US chose the Taliban, Obaid says, with the belief that they would be able to take over Afghanistan.

But it was the Taliban's supreme commander who would later demand "a removal of all US troops from Saudi Arabia". Ominously, Obaid adds, "this is the same call made by

Wahhabi fundamentalists in the Kingdom before the Riyadh and Dhahran bombings. And if Mr bin Laden actually was behind these attacks, there is even more reason to fear Taliban-inspired terrorism."

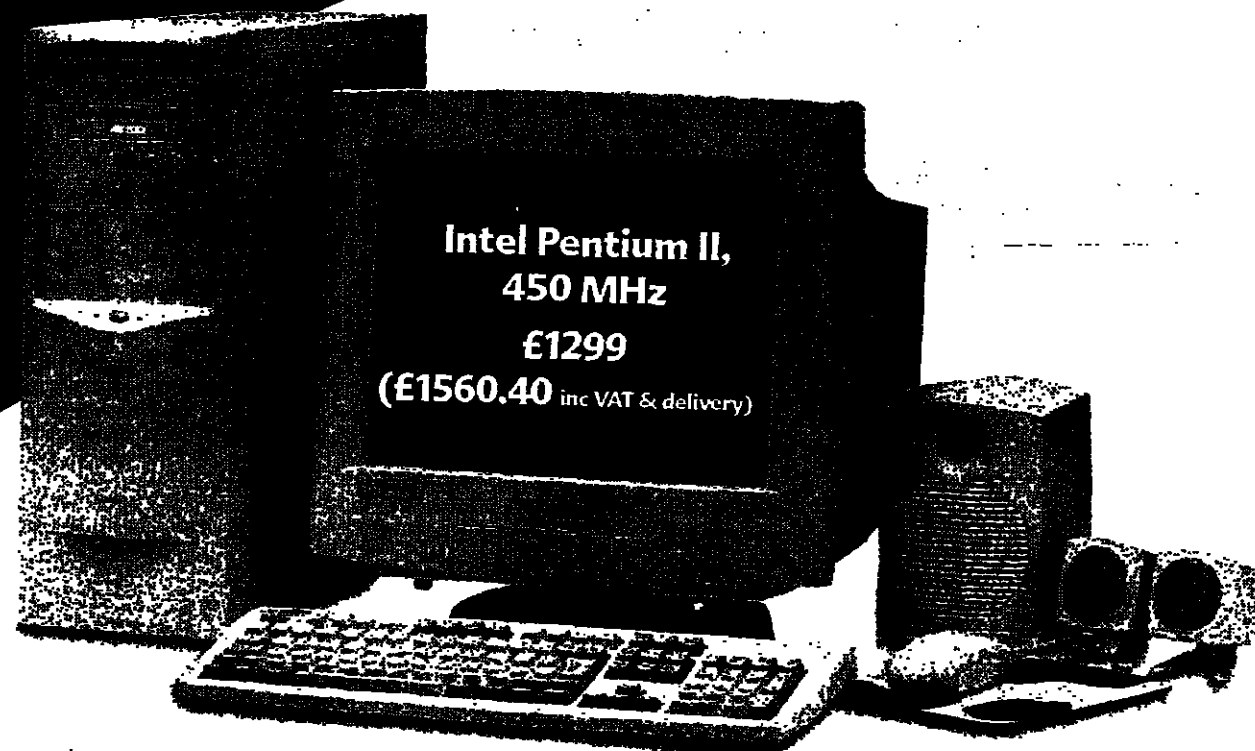
Obaid goes on: "According to a high-ranking official in the [Saudi] ministry of justice, Sheikh Mohamed bin Jubier [current chairman of the Saudi Consultative Council], who has been called the 'exporter' of the Wahhabi creed in the Muslim world, was a strong advocate of aiding the Taliban."

The connection should have been clear to US operatives in the region, as it was known that the Taliban were largely composed of Afghan refugees from Pakistani theological schools, whose clerics "received their degrees from Saudi Arabia and taught a strict form of Wahhabi theology and law".



Militia organiser Osama bin Laden (left), and Crown Prince Abdullah (above), now undermined by fundamentalists

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Cheney: 'promises'

the 1973 Middle East war, a step he eventually took "to pre-empt internal dissent and satisfy the growing frustration of the ulama (religious authorities)".

But it is the second half of his report, and its evidence of the immense power wielded by the most conservative elements in the Kingdom, that has so upset the Saudis.

He quotes a "senior official" at the Saudi ministry of justice - a member of the al-Shaikh family who have held the highest religious offices in the Kingdom - as saying King Fahd sought the help of his senior religious leaders before allowing US troops to land in Saudi Ara-

Mass trial 'a pantomime'

A MASS trial of Algerian terrorist suspects opened in an expensively converted gymnasium in the southern suburbs of Paris yesterday amid allegations of pantomime justice and political interference.

No fewer than 138 defendants, more than 200 lawyers and 300 police officers will gather each working day for the next two months in the gymnasium of a prison-officer training school at Fleury-Mérogis, 20 miles from the capital.

A last-minute attempt to delay the trial - on the ground that it is impossible to ensure a fair hearing for so many defendants simultaneously - was rejected by the presiding judges.

Defence lawyers and human rights activists have also complained about the draconian French anti-terrorist laws, which have kept 27 of the defendants in jail awaiting trial for three to four years.

Local politicians have grumbled about the £1m cost of converting the gym, most of it spent on temporary security measures, including 27 bullet-proof boxes for the accused.

BY JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

There have been questions about the methods of the investigating judge - France's terrorist-buster-in-chief, Jean-Louis Bruguière. Defence lawyers say that the epic size of the charge sheet reflects Maitre Bruguière's desire to burnish his media image.

Scores of the defendants, they allege, are relatives or chance acquaintances of the core suspects, and probably will be acquitted before the trial ends.

The case arises from a series of police raids in 1994 and 1995 that allegedly unravelled an Algerian fundamentalist terrorist network planning attacks on civilian targets in France.

The network was allegedly masterminded by Mohamed Chalabi, 43, known to police as a small-time criminal. Large quantities of weapons and explosives were found in the raids, but defence lawyers will argue that these were intended to supply the Islamic fundamentalist side in the Algerian civil war - not to attack French property or people.

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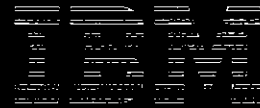
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Japan

Prime Minister

too depressed

to run country

The 'black d



Doing the

Japan wakes up to defence danger

IN AN embarrassing admission that has revived debate about its military vulnerability, the Japanese government conceded yesterday that it failed to spot a North Korean ballistic missile that was fired over its territory on Monday.

The country's leaders have suddenly woken up to the need for a star war-style missile defence shield, which would knock out incoming enemy missiles in mid-flight. Despite encouragement from the United States, Tokyo has been reluctant in the past to invest in an

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Tokyo

anti-missile network for fear of offending China.

The Taepo Dong I missile, which could potentially deliver a chemical, conventional or nuclear warhead anywhere in Japan in less than six minutes, was detected by American military forces who informed Tokyo after two stages of the missile had crashed into the sea.

Japan's Self-Defence Force, which knew about the possibility of the missile test and was in

a state of "vigilance", according to the government, was unaware of its launch.

The government's spokesman, Sadaaki Numata, said yesterday: "The first information that we received ... from the US sources, was that there had apparently been a missile launch from the eastern part of Korea to the Sea of Japan."

North Korea's programme to develop the long-range Taepo Dong, alongside its existing arsenal of short to medium-range Scud and Rodong missiles, was well-known to

diplomats and military analysts. But yesterday's test came almost literally out of the blue to most Japanese and has provoked anxiety in a people acutely conscious of their geographical isolation at the edge of an unpredictable continent.

"It is crucial that Japan have in place an air-tight defence system so that it is not taken by surprise in the event of an attack," the country's best-selling paper, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, said yesterday in an editorial.

"Japan's people are extremely anxious and I am deeply

worried," the Prime Minister, Keizo Obuchi, said.

"People in Japan should be very alarmed," said Robert Karniol, Asia-Pacific editor of *Jane's Defence Weekly*. "Not just because this unstable regime has the capability to reach Japan, but because the Japanese government didn't know about the launch."

At a special meeting of the Japanese cabinet's security council yesterday morning, the defence minister, Fukushiro Nukaga, was reported to have said that Japan will without

delay consider an anti-missile defence system.

The US has been urging Japan to participate in a project to develop the Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) initiative, a futuristic system of early-warning satellites and surface-based rockets that would knock out incoming missiles. But Japan's Defence Agency has made no request for funds for the project, ostensibly to avoid offending the Chinese government, which has long been suspicious of any strengthening of Japanese military capabilities.

However, the expense of the TMD, which could cost upwards of one trillion yen (¥1.15bn), may also be a factor in the current economic crisis. An alternative is a cheaper system of independent reconnaissance satellites, which has been discussed since the Seventies.

Japan's leaders were unanimous in expressing their anger. "If the firing was intentional, it's quite fair to say that a war could have broken out," said Yoshiro Mori, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Japanese food aid to

victims of North Korea's famine is likely to be put on hold.

The incident also jeopardises an international agreement designed to halt Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons programme by providing fuel oil and safe nuclear reactors.

The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Association, the international body overseeing the agreement, of which Japan is a key member, yesterday announced that the supply of funds for the project had been "indefinitely postponed by some member countries".

Norway: Leader cries off duties as his father tells of son's sleepless nights caused by unfair criticism

Prime Minister too depressed to run country

"LUCKY NORWAY", say envious neighbours in Scandinavia. The country has oil and gas galore, bucketfuls of fish and plenty of scenery. No one really needs to work, and still everyone is rich.

Lucky also to rank among world leaders in terms of the per capita number of psychologists: things are not going too well at the moment.

The price of oil is plunging, the national currency is on the skids, mortgage rates are going through the roof, and amid all this the Prime Minister has gone on a week's sick leave with an illness only a psychologist can fix.

BY IMRE KARACS

of this on his own," Bondevik Senior explained. A week's leave, the psychologists explained in the nation's newspapers, would suggest that the PM was perhaps not clinically depressed, merely down. The blues may have been brought on by his work-load, or by the sudden plunge in his popularity in recent weeks.

The three-party minority coalition including Mr Bondevik's Christian People's Party was grappling with the budget as the currency crisis struck.

cessive rise in interest rates and speculative raids on the krone, seems to have knocked the 50-year-old Mr Bondevik off his feet.

Norwegians digested the news with sympathy, and there were words of comfort from his political adversaries. "It shouldn't matter," declared Thorbjorn Jagland, leader of the Labour Party. "One must be allowed to be sick in this country." Even Karl I Hagen, leader of the far-right Progress Party, applauded Mr Bondevik's decision "to be more open about mental suffering".



Kjell Magne Bondevik, an affable Lutheran pastor pushed into the vacant prime ministerial chair last year, just could not take the strain. On Monday his office announced that the leader was suffering from a "depressive reaction to stress".

Stunned Norwegians, well-accustomed to feeble excuses for avoiding work - sunny weather is deemed a reasonable one - had to find out the rest yesterday from Mr Bondevik's 93-year-old father.

"We noticed something was wrong in the last two weeks," Johannes Bondevik told the daily *Aftenposten*.

His son could not get to sleep, and seemed generally shattered.

"He has not only had a great deal of pressure from work, he's also had little understanding from the opposition, and was subjected to a lot of unfair criticism ... He cannot manage all

Normally, balancing the books in Norway does not require great skill, but negotiations this time were bogged down by quarrels over the Prime Minister's pet project.

At the weekend it became apparent that his plan to give families with toddlers the equivalent of £300 a month "child-minder benefit" would have to be shelved. This blow, rather than the seventh suc-

cessive rise in interest rates and speculative raids on the krone, seems to have knocked the 50-year-old Mr Bondevik off his feet.

Norwegians digested the news with sympathy, and there were words of comfort from his political adversaries. "It shouldn't matter," declared Thorbjorn Jagland, leader of the Labour Party. "One must be allowed to be sick in this country." Even Karl I Hagen, leader of the far-right Progress Party, applauded Mr Bondevik's decision "to be more open about mental suffering".

But there were also voices suggesting that anyone who could not stand the heat should get out of the political kitchen. "You have to be able to take political pressure," said Odvar Nordli, who in 1981 was forced to resign as Labour prime minister by a combination of splitting headaches and debilitating party splits.

Not even tolerant Norway, Mr Nordli hinted darkly, would put up with a PM on permanent sick leave. "It's not a problem that Kjell Magne Bondevik is taking a week off, but if he is going to be ill for a longer period, then you have to re-evaluate the situation."

If he should leave, parliament might still have to summon a psychologist. For the obvious successor is Mr Jagland, head of the biggest party. But he is still in a sulk and refusing to form a government, because a few thousand Labour voters snubbed him in the last elections.



Kjell Magne Bondevik (above) followed another Norwegian premier, Odvar Nordli (left), in falling prey to stress

Burma rulers prepare to open colleges

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Rangoon

THE BURMESE government is poised to reopen the nation's universities, which have been closed for the past two years since students mounted pro-democracy demonstrations.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hla Min, the government's de facto spokesman, told *The Independent* that he estimated the universities could open "in two to three months' time". He said that although politicians had "done much to incite the students", he believed "most students are apolitical" and there was little concern about protests breaking out again.

Aung San Sun Kyi, the opposition leader, is also concerned about the lack of education, and says that if the universities reopen she does "not see any reason why there should be unrest unless there is cause for it".

Burma's universities have been closed for all but two of the past ten years. A serious education gap is emerging in the country, an evident concern to the government. "Kids are worried, parents are worried," said Lt-Col Hla Min.

Final-year examinations for students, who have had no classes for two years, have just been held. It is widely rumoured that all students sitting these tests will pass them, regardless of ability. Exams will then be held for other years and, to cope with the backlog, classes will be doubled up.

The government was still sufficiently nervous over re-admitting students to university campuses to organise the exams in schools where smaller groups of students could be controlled more easily.

There is also a crisis in the schools, where a combination of poverty and lack of resources has led to an alarming drop-out rate at primary school level.

"Children are happier when they go out to work because they can earn money and contribute something to their families," said a worker with a non-governmental organisation that has child-oriented projects.

She said that those staying at school are faced with demoralised teachers who are not paid enough to survive on their school salaries. "The whole quality of education has broken down," she added. "The children are trained by rote learning, they are not encouraged to think."

The 'black dog' that picks victims among world leaders



THE NORWEGIAN Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, off work for at least a week because of acute depression, is but the latest victim of a sickness that has long afflicted political leaders in many lands.

Britain has had a famous list of sufferers, none more so than Winston Churchill (right) who would refer to the beast as the "black dog". Harold Macmillan was another prime minister to be afflicted, never able to escape "the inside

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

feeling that something awful and unknown was about to happen". Some found respite in drink. Macmillan found his in "going away for a few days" to read Jane Austen. Lord Steel of Aikwood (left), the former Liberal leader, is among contemporary politicians to have had bouts of depression.

At least one in 200 people suffers from clinical depression. The nature of

their job, however, makes politicians especially vulnerable. Few trades cast their practitioners so brutally from the elation of electoral victory and untrammelled power to defeat and nothing.

Abroad it is no different. The Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, is similarly afflicted. Just as Churchill's worst bout of "Black Dog" came after he was ejected from the government during the First World War, Mr Yeltsin reached his nadir after being

disgraced by Mikhail Gorbachev in November 1987.

"I would sleep three or four hours a night and then the thoughts would come creeping back," he wrote in his autobiography *Against The Grain*. "Everything about me was burnt out, everything within me was burnt out." Twice, according to his former bodyguard Alexander Korzhakov, he tried to commit suicide.

After being cast into darkness by the Mr Yeltsin

he despised, Mr Gorbachev himself would display some symptoms of the malady. So did even that most nonchalant of men, George Bush, after his presidential defeat by Bill Clinton in 1992, which he never believed could happen.

Among this distinguished company, Mr Bondevik's service is to have owned up to the condition while he suffered from it, in office, and to seek medical advice to deal with it.



Doing the rich man's dirty work in City of Angels

ONCE UPON a time Los Angeles, like all big-city dwellers in the United States, were asked to separate their recyclable rubbish into glass, paper and aluminium cans before putting it out for collection. But that was before the advent of the Big Blue Bins.

For the past month or so, the bins have been popping up on street corners with an alluring invitation to dump everything - newspapers, bottles and even plastic - right inside without bothering to sort it all first.

This makes the whole process wonderfully convenient, of course, so much so that most people have accepted the labour-saving change without asking themselves the niggly little question: if we are not separating the garbage, then who is?

The answer, for those with

enough of a conscience to listen, is that the task has been taken on by labourers at the very bottom of the social pile, who wade through the detritus in baking hot recycling centres well out of public view on the fringes of the city.

The logic of the operation is cold but simple: it is far cheaper to pay rock-bottom wages to a handful of short-term labourers and ensure that the recyclables are sorted properly than it is to rely on householders, most of whom do not do the job right and make a large proportion of the rubbish impossible to reuse.

"People come up and tell me how religious they are about separating their cans and bottles. While we certainly appreciate that, I wish I could say it for the entire city. Regrettably, it just hasn't happened,"

said Daniel Hackney, who works for the city sanitation bureau and spends most of his days taking coachloads of foreign municipal managers around LA's evolving network of "Merfs", or material recycling facilities, to give them their official name.

Mr Hackney insists that LA is at the cutting edge of urban waste management, and that sooner or later cities around the world will follow its lead. The economics are unassailable, he says, since the cost of labour is easily absorbed by the far higher crop of recyclables harvested - as much as 50 per cent, as against 6 per cent under the old system. Not only that, but street scavengers can no longer cream off the pick of pre-sorted recyclables, and jobs are created too.

There is, however, a less

AMERICAN TIMES LOS ANGELES



Waste management is a can of worms for US politicians

kind interpretation being offered by some of the city's more ardent self-flagellation freaks: that Angelenos are simply inconsiderate, lazy and all too ready to let others do

their dirty work for them, especially if they do not have to pay for it.

There is some historical evidence for such an assertion. Part of the reason the Repub-

lican Sam Yorty was elected mayor in the Sixties was because he promised to cancel an early garbage separation programme, which he denounced as "coercion against the housewives of the city". Los Angeles is a city founded on naked free market enterprise and individual freedom, not collective responsibility or civic sense.

This was a point that even Mr Hackney partly conceded, saying it was impossible to imbue people with a sense of responsibility in a city with such vast gulfs in wealth, culture and language. "In a small, socially homogeneous city like Santa Monica [a separate entity within the LA metropolitan area that runs its own garbage programme] you can aspire to have your glass and cans and paper all neatly sorted. But not when you are dealing with

dozens of neighbourhoods and language groups."

Despite this admission of failure, the authorities are not beyond reacting sensitively to negative publicity about their new garbage policy. A couple of weeks ago a *Los Angeles Times* reporter, Robert Jones, visited a Merf in sizzling Sun Valley and found what he called "a scene out of the 19th century" - workers bending over a fast-moving conveyor belt, furiously pulling at different items and dropping them into a bin below them. Many of them are at it for 10 hours day, few earning much more than the minimum wage of \$5.75 (\$3.44 an hour).

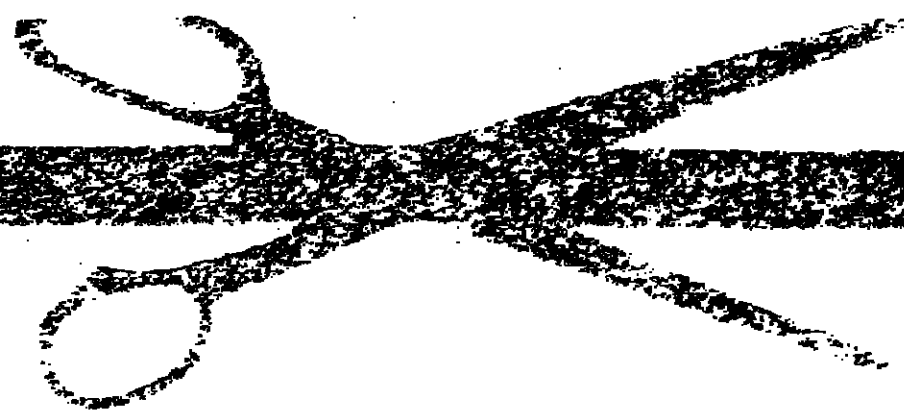
So furious was the city and the private companies they employ to run the Merfs that journalists were promptly barred from witnessing such

scenes again. Mr Hackney raged that the article was distorted and inaccurate, but could not fault it for more than a few errors of detail.

He did say, however, that the Merfs were growing increasingly mechanised, so that soon most if not all of the sorting will be done by machine. "I suppose Jones will then berate us for cutting jobs. Well, you can't have it both ways," he said.

But Mr Jones's argument was less with the city than it was with his fellow citizens. "We dump our mess into blue bins because we can afford to pay a certain class of desperate men to separate the mess for us," he wrote. And that, one might add, is the unenviable spirit of Los Angeles in a nutshell.

ANDREW GUMBEL



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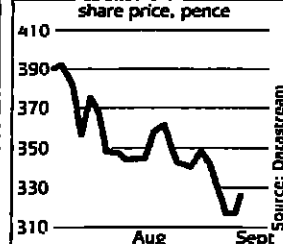
US firm offers £207m for Rubicon

AMERICAN ENGINEERING group Applied Power yesterday made an £207m agreed takeover bid for Rubicon, the British computer box and electronic equipment manufacturer. The 235p per share bid follows Applied's successful £115m takeover of Vero Group, a British electronic components group in May.

Rubicon shares jumped 65p to close at 225p yesterday on news of the bid. Applied's chairman, Richard Sim, said that the acquisition of Rubicon will transform Applied into a leading global manufacturer of casings and enclosures for electronic systems.

Shell shares rise on merger hopes

SHELL TRANSPORT & TRADING



Shares in Shell Transport & Trading rose strongly yesterday amid persistent speculation that it may merge with Texaco. A Netherlands spokesman for the Anglo-Dutch Shell group insisted that a full corporate merger was not on the cards, but he admitted talks on combining various aspects of its business were possible. Shares in Shell rose from 316.5p to 327p in London with analysts saying investors were buying the stock in anticipation of a merger - which could bring cost-savings, restructuring and better critical mass, they believed.

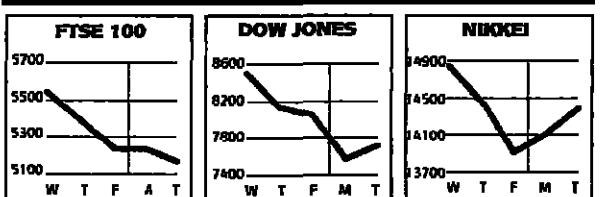
Prince and KPMG meet in court

A LEGAL BATTLE between Prince Jefri, younger brother of the Sultan of Brunei, and the accountancy firm KPMG reaches London's High Court in the Strand today. Prince Jefri is seeking to prevent KPMG from divulging personal financial information about himself to the Government of Brunei, which has hired KPMG to carry out a thorough investigation of the oil kingdom's financial position.

Last year the prince engaged KPMG to compile a report on his personal finances, and provided unprecedented access to 50 forensic accountants from the firm. The prince is now claiming that KPMG cannot do the new job for the Government as this would be a conflict of interest.

A spokesman for the prince said yesterday: "Prince Jefri has nothing to hide. He has absolutely no objections to legitimate professionals being engaged to make these sorts of investigations, as long as they are not conflicted." A KPMG spokesman countered: "That's why we are in court tomorrow - because we believe that we are not conflicted."

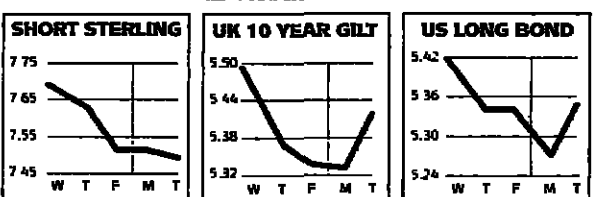
STOCK MARKETS



Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

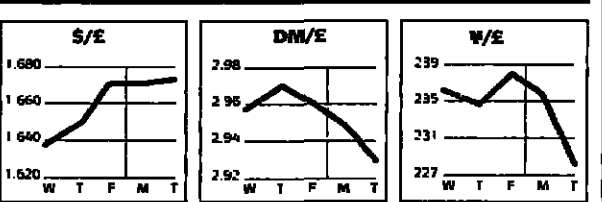
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FTSE 250	4627.30	-158.90	-3.32	5970.90	4428.30	4.35
FTSE 350	2468.60	-46.50	-1.85	2969.10	2141.80	3.93
FTSE All Share	2393.25	-47.59	-1.95	2985.12	2106.59	3.93
FTSE SmallCap	2047.40	-78.70	-3.70	2793.80	2103.20	4.05
FTSE Pre-Opening	1140.20	-46.90	-3.95	1517.10	1187.10	4.51
FTSE AIM	862.80	-35.80	-3.98	1146.90	898.60	1.56
FTSE EBLCC 100	890.72	-18.72	-2.06			
Dow Jones	7761.26	-223.73	-2.97	9367.84	6971.32	1.91
Nikkei	14369.63	-261.74	-1.86	18775.08	13792.76	1.06
Hong Seng	7062.47	-212.57	-2.92	15242.65	6544.79	4.60
Dax	4791.81	-42.08	-0.87	6217.83	3487.24	3.95

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 Year	Yr chg	10 Year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	7.58	0.27	7.31	-0.31	5.43	-1.60	5.15	-1.81
US	5.59	-0.13	5.49	-0.57	5.08	-1.20	5.35	-1.21
Japan	0.63	0.05	0.63	-0.02	1.32	-0.91	1.95	-0.81
Germany	3.48	0.17	3.62	-0.02	4.33	-1.37	5.17	-1.22

CURRENCIES



Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Pound	1.6738	+0.13c	1.6115	Dollar	0.9774	-0.05p	0.6205
D-Mark	2.9296	-1.84p	2.9237	Yen	1.7503	-2.18p	1.8152
Yen	228.13	-0.58	194.46	Base Rates	7.50	7.00	
E index	105.30	-0.70	102.10	S index	111.90	-3.00	106.20

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	11.94	-0.01	18.17	GDP	115.40	2.60	112.48
Gold (\$)	279.25	3.70		RPI	163.00	3.50	157.49
Silver (\$)	4.73	-0.05	4.66	Base Rates	7.50	7.00	

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.8177	Mexican (nuevo peso)	15.11
Austria (schillings)	20.06	Netherlands (guilders)	3.2207
Belgium (francs)	59.57	New Zealand (\$)	3.2316
Canada (\$)	2.5487	Norway (krone)	12.89
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8365	Portugal (escudos)	269.57
Denmark (krone)	10.82	Saudi Arabia (riels)	6.1059
Finland (markka)	8.7339	Spain (pesetas)	2.8129
France (francs)	9.5798	South Africa (rand)	242.01
Germany (marks)	2.8621	Sweden (krone)	10.30
Greece (drachma)	494.41	Switzerland (francs)	2.3579
Hong Kong (\$)	12.58	Thailand (bahts)	61.95
Ireland (pounds)	1.1350	Turkey (liras)	444.087
India (rupees)	65.45	USA (\$)	1.6360
Israel (shekels)	5.9793		
Italy (lira)	2837		
Japan (yen)	228.61		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.4725		
Malta (lira)	0.6278		

Notes for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

World reaction: From Midlands to Malaysia, banks and firms count the cost of collapse

Crisis costs Barclays £335m

RUSSIA'S FINANCIAL crisis could lead to a worldwide credit crunch, with serious knock-on effects on the real economy, Martin Taylor, the chief executive of Barclays Bank, claimed yesterday.

The warning came after the bank admitted it had lost some £335m over the last two weeks as a result of the crisis, most of it over the last few days. Mr Taylor said it was "non-sense" to dismiss Russia as "an economy the size of Luxembourg ring-fenced from the rest of the world."

"You cannot have a major world economy defaulting without that creating shockwaves around the world," he said. "The prospects for the world economy are materially worse than they were four weeks ago. It will lead to a contraction of credit. Bankers' natural reaction is to call a halt to lending," he said.

Two other banks disclosed big Russian hits yesterday. Nomura, the Japanese bank which is a big player in Eastern Europe, disclosed that it had lost \$350m on its holdings in Russian treasury bills.

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

On Wall Street, Bankers Trust, which earlier this year bought the equity business of National Westminster Bank, said it expected to show a net loss in the third quarter after it went down \$350m on its Russian trading book.

Salomon Smith Barney, the US investment bank, said late on Monday that it had lost \$150m in the last two months. Barclays estimated its total bank lending and net securities exposure to Russia was some £340m, most of which was held by Barclays Capital, the debt trading operation run by Bob Diamond.

The group expects to take a charge of the order of £250m to cover potential losses. In addition Barclays reckons it has lost £75m because of the collapse in emerging market debt trading worldwide since the Russian crisis, most of it over the last few days. Mr Diamond said that there were no specific cutbacks planned as a result, but "anyone who is in this business right now who isn't reassessing the business ought to be."

Yesterday's warning from Barclays caught analysts by surprise. British bank exposure to Russia had been widely

thought to be relatively modest compared to banks in Germany which collectively are the biggest holders of Russian sovereign debt, or the US investment banks. Nick Collier, analyst at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, said he would be cutting his forecast for the year by more than the £340m, reflecting his concerns that Barclays Capital would now be allowed less capital to play with. He had been expecting pre-tax profits of £2.63bn this year. As well as being the biggest loss suffered by a British bank and the biggest disclosed by a

major financial institution so far, Credit Suisse First Boston, one of the biggest players in the Russian debt market, is thought to have lost \$400-\$500m. Barclays has written down its entire stock of Russian debt by 80p per cent in the case of dollar-denominated debt and 90 per cent for rouble debt, reflecting the fact that the Russian currency has halved in value in the last few days. "Our position has got worse to the tune of £100m since Wednesday," said Mr Taylor, adding that Barclays was possibly the most heavily exposed of British banks.



Malaysians watch a telecast by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad who imposed money control. China Press

Malaysia brings in money control

MALAYSIA HAS decided to withdraw the ringgit from international markets following a devaluation of its currency by more than 40 per cent in a year.

Yesterday the Central Bank in Kuala Lumpur announced a raft of measures to prevent the international trading and holding of the Malaysian ringgit overseas. Stiff currency controls will apply.

The stock market delivered its verdict by registering a plunge of over 13 per cent in share prices, but the ringgit rose in value by 5.2 per cent.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said the country could "no longer stay with the

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Hong Kong

so-called free market system." He claimed the move would promote the stability of the economy and encourage foreign investment.

However, many market analysts believe it will discourage overseas investment in Malaysia and make the economy more insular.

On Saturday both the Central Bank governor and his deputy resigned in a move widely interpreted as opposition to the imposition of strict foreign controls.

A number of other Asian

countries have looked at the option of taking their currencies out of the international market, effectively bringing them back to their position before the export-led Asian economic boom began in the late 1970s.

Meanwhile in Hong Kong, it appears that the frenzy of government share-buying last Friday left the state with an estimated 3 per cent holding in local blue-chip stocks. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority last night disclosed that its stake in HSBC Holdings is 8.9 per cent, double the stake of Prudential Corp which was previously the largest holder of HSBC stock.

There was some suspicion that the government had re-entered the stock market yesterday, limiting the fall in share prices to just below 3 per cent. However most traders believe that the big buyers were the institutions covering short positions taken last week.

The government's heavy intervention contributed to a downgrade of Hong Kong's currency and loan ratings by Standard and Poor on Monday night. Paul Coughlin, S&P's managing director for public finance in Hong Kong, said that the government activity confirmed "that life is riskier in Hong Kong."

Insolvency in Japan hits Walsall offshoot

AN INJECTION-moulding company based near Walsall has been forced into receivership following the failure of its Japanese parent company, which itself was a victim of the Asian financial crisis, writes John Willcock.

Showpla (UK), which supplies components to the car industry, employs 150 people and has annual sales of £10-£12m. Its parent, Showpla Plastics, entered a "rehabilitation process" under Japanese insolvency law on 14 August, which in turn prompted several of the British subsidiary's clients and suppliers to lose confidence in Showpla.

Corporate recovery partners William Tacon and Kim Rayment of Ernst & Young were called in as receivers by Showpla's management, and are confident of their can sell the business as a going concern.

When customers heard that Showpla was in trouble, a number of them repossessed the dies used by Showpla's 19 giant injection moulding presses, said Mr Tacon. It is common practice for customers to own the dies used by suppliers in the injection-moulding industry. Showpla was set up 10 years ago to supply Japanese electronics and auto companies operating in the UK.

Hopes fail for lower UK rates

HOPES among industrialists that instability on the world's financial markets might convince the Bank of England to bring forward an early cut in interest rates were undermined yesterday when the Bank's latest money supply figures showed a pick-up in monetary growth and continued strength in consumer credit and mortgage lending.

The Bank of England's monetary policy committee has its September meeting next week, but few analysts expect it to cut interest rates then, although there is a growing feeling that rates will start to fall by the end of the year.

Stephen Hannah, chief econ-

omist of IJB said: "I don't see a cut as conceivable in the near term."

"The principal issue is the underlying state of the labour market and continuing growth in services. The manufacturing recession has been with us for some time and there's nothing new there."

"Clearly the Bank is not going to increase rates again but a reduction does not seem to me to be at all likely."

Richard Jeffrey, of Charterhouse Tilney said he expected the MPC to discuss the possibility of cutting rates next week, "but I would be surprised if

more than one or two members argued the case very forcefully."

Last week the CBI called for an urgent cut in interest rates after reporting a collapse in output and orders in its latest survey.

The turmoil on stock markets in recent days has also increased speculation that the Federal Reserve and other central banks might try to restore stability by cutting rates. Most analysts, however, think the Dow Jones index would have to drop much further - to perhaps 6000 - before the Fed steps in.

Meanwhile the latest evidence on the state of the UK economy continues to point to a two-speed performance, with manufacturing bearing the

brunt of the downturn. The monthly purchasing managers index, published by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, showed a further contraction of manufacturing output - the fifth consecutive monthly fall.

Yesterday's money supply figures showed slightly faster than expected growth. M0 - the narrow measure of money supply - grew by 0.6 per cent in August, taking the annual rate up from 5.8 per cent to 6.2 per cent.

Another sign of robust consumer demand was a £1.1bn pound rise in consumer credit - and a sharp rise in mortgage lending.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

THE UK stockmarket posted a sharp loss as uncertainty over Russia and global recession fears still weighed on sentiment yesterday. The FTSE 100 closed 80.3 points lower at 5169.1 after losses of up to 173.7 points. Dealers said a rebound in Wall Street after Monday's slump and selective bargain-hunting by UK investors helped to pare some losses later. Second-liners were hit worst: the FTSE-250 ended at a year low of 4627.3 after shedding 158.9 points, and small caps closed at an all-time 2047.4 low on a 78.7 point loss.

Market Report, page 17

NEW YORK

THE Dow Jones Industrial Index staged a recovery yesterday after Monday's 500-point collapse as bargain-hunters moved in. However, the market was very nervous at first. It rose, then fell, and rose by lunchtime. Computer stocks showed the best gains, with telecom and financial shares faring worst. Travelers shares were down on the news of \$150m losses at its Salomon Smith Barney broking business. Bankers Trust fell after warning of third quarter losses because of problems in Russia.

TOKYO

THE KEY Nikkei average bounced back to close 1.86 per cent higher after losing over 3 per cent at one point in the morning. Initially the market had been battered by Russia's instability but recovered on active buying-back. The Nikkei 225 closed with gains of 261.74 points or 1.86 per cent at 14,369.63. That was off the morning low of 13,664.74, down more than 3 per cent from Monday's close. Dealers said the final rebound was technical. A strategist at Commerz Securities (Japan), Hitoshi Ichio, said: "The Nikkei's rebound has been feeble since it slipped below 14,300."

HONG KONG

HONG KONG stocks dropped to a sharply lower close yesterday after a choppy session that saw prices tumble after Wall Street's overnight fall, but also move briefly into positive territory on short covering. The Hang Seng lost 212.57 points, or 2.92 per cent, to end at 7,062.47 after bouncing between 6,882.43 and 7,306.40. Turnover shrank to HK\$6.2bn against Monday's level of HK\$6.57bn, leading brokers to doubt that the government was supporting the market by buying shares.

FRANKFURT

SHARES closed marginally higher in late trading in Frankfurt, with the Xetra DAX closing up 44.62 points, nearly 1 per cent, at 4,855.90. The Frankfurt market followed the roller-coaster ride of the rest of Europe, but ended higher on the belief that US stocks had been oversold on Monday. The Xetra DAX traded in a range of 4,647.88 to its closing level. "The market has been extremely volatile today and there has been a lot of uncertainty, with nobody really knowing what to do," said a trader.

Credit controls foxed by a gecko

LIKE A RECEDED tide, economic crisis invariably exposes some nasty surprises, some unexpected large wrecks lying just beneath the surface. Nobody would suggest Barclays falls into this category, but its provisions for Russia and the revelation of trading losses at Barclays Capital certainly come as a bit of a shock to an investment community which had been under the impression that direct British exposure to Russia was too small to be concerned about.

To those who follow the constant tiding and frothing of fashion in the banking sector, it marks another black mark for Martin Taylor, who seems to have had more than his fair share of them over the last six months. First there was the disengagement from BZW, which he was accused of mishandling. Then came a series of slights from those he approached with proposals for consolidation. His last set of results were poorly received, and there have been persistent rumours that he's bored after five years in the hot seat, and is looking for an exit. Now this.

If there's a lesson from Derek Wanless and NatWest about what to do when you're everyone's whipping



OUTLOOK

boy, it is just sit tight and wait for the City's ire to move onto someone else. Mr Wanless was in a much worse position a year ago than Mr Taylor is today, in terms of how he was regarded in the City, but he's been telling a good story of late and he's everybody's favourite again now.

In making these provisions, Mr Taylor is in any case recognising a reality which many of his competitors are still refusing to come to terms with. Barclays is writing off 90 per cent of all outstanding exposure to Russia; others have yet to grasp this nettle and publicly admit there is little if any possibility of getting their money back. Mr Taylor

has now cleared out the stables, others have yet to do so.

Quite what Barclays was doing sticking its money into Russian Geckos and other questionable high yield debt instruments is another issue. It all goes to show that in banking you can refine your credit and risk control systems until you are blue in the face - as Mr Taylor claims to have done - but there's always some blighter who keeps working against you unnoticed. So much for arguments that in dismantling BZW, Barclays offloaded the financially dangerous bits.

Markets: sell into the rallies

RECESSION, DEFLATION, even depression and slump - these are the words on everyone's lips. This is understandable enough. When stock markets are plunging, it's all too easy to get caught up in the rhetoric of meltdown, panic and crash.

The truth of the matter is, however, that we are not yet in a recession, nor, on the balance of probability, does it appear likely there is going to be one, either in

Europe or the US. Recession is defined as two successive quarters of negative growth, and hardly anyone is predicting that for Europe and the US, even after the traumas of the last month.

That doesn't mean it won't happen, or that things aren't going to be anything but extremely tough over the next few years. Right now events are alarming enough to suggest a number of very ugly outcomes, each of them capable of tipping the world into outright recession.

The most compelling of these is the possibility that the bear market we are now witnessing on Wall Street will turn into something similar to the Tokyo rout of the early 1990s. Japan is the nightmare precedent for what happens when a big asset price bubble bursts. Don't try and call the bottom, just sell into the rallies and stick your money into bonds, is the doomsday lesson of the Tokyo collapse.

The parallels with Wall Street are uncanny. Like Japan, valuations were driven sky high by the belief that the US had discovered economic nirvana, that strong, low inflation growth could go on for ever. Like Japan, the bull market in

equities has itself helped sustain US economic growth, by making Americans feel richer and thereby encouraging them to spend more. In Japan in the late 1980s companies thought themselves so overweight in capital that they bought stakes in one another. In the US in the late 1990s, companies buy shares in themselves.

Despite these alarming similarities, there are also some key differences. The most important of these is that as far as we know, Western banks are not up to their necks in dodgy and unsuspected property loans of the type that sunk the Japanese banking system. Russian, and other bad debt problems are mounting, but on the whole, Western banks appear well capitalised enough to withstand a very considerable shock without going under.

We know this, because unlike their Japanese counterparts in the late 1980s, Western banks have reasonably transparent accounts. Furthermore, the US and European economies are much more flexible than that of Japan and are therefore capable of adapting quite quickly to changed circumstances.

None of this means we should all

back into equities. As Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays, argues, we may, after the latest traumatic events in Russia, be looking at a considerable, worldwide credit crunch. If nobody will lend, then economic activity dries up.

So although we may not be heading for outright recession, we've probably got two or three very rocky years ahead of us. As a consequence, the fall on Wall Street could have a good deal further to go, notwithstanding its numerous attempts at a rally yesterday. The downswing may not be as deep or prolonged as Tokyo, and its consequences are unlikely to be as catastrophic, but when a liquidity bubble deflates, the effects are always bad. It's just a question of degree.

Southern goes north of border

NO PREMIUM mergers are rarely quite what they claim. There was little doubt who the City thought had got the better half of the latest example of the genre - yesterday's tie up between Scottish Hydro-Electric and Southern Electric. Since the

merger will result in an immediate 22 per cent hike in the Scottish Hydro dividend, it's surely the Scots, isn't it? They get the head office too, which is to be located in Perth.

On the other hand, the two top management jobs are going to the Southern lot. This might seem a reasonable division of spoils to Jim Forbes, the quick-witted Glaswegian who becomes chief executive of the combined group, but his own shareholders might beg to quibble. For Mr Forbes, it's also a bit of a home coming, albeit to the wrong side of Scotland. He gets to take his finance director, too.

None of this will break the deal. Mr Forbes has failed to consummate two mergers so far - with National Power and Southern Water - but the City still loves him for his no-nonsense style and his ability to squeeze costs. More difficult to call is what regulators make of it. Scottish Power management to get away with acquiring ManWeb but that was under the last Government. Peter Mandelson has yet to decide on PowerGen's bid for East Midlands Electricity. But then again, the Scottish card is a powerful one with New Labour, and Mr Forbes has played it perfectly.

IN BRIEF

Charterhouse leads Class 98

THE investment banking group Charterhouse is leading the Class 98 consortium, which has signed a £240m project to build five new schools and provide non-educational services, including maintenance and cleaning, in the Falkirk area. The project is the first in the UK to group a number of schools together in a single scheme.

IT pay boom

MORE THAN 65,000 information technology jobs were on offer during April, an increase of 42 per cent on the same period last year, according to the SSP/Computer Weekly quarterly survey of appointments data and trends. The booming demand for IT staff has led to a sharp increase in salaries, with the average salary for IT managers reaching £50,000 a year and the average salary for management consultants rising to £73,000 a year.

Gas find in Egypt

BRITISH Gas International, a subsidiary of BG and its partner Edison International, has found more gas in Egypt after successfully testing an appraisal well in the West Delta Deep Marine concession. BG said that the well is capable of producing more than 30m standard cubic feet of gas a day and follows the successful testing of two exploration wells in June.

Persimmon rises

SHARES of the housebuilding group Persimmon bucked the market trend yesterday rising 6.5p to 146p after reporting a 30 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £28.1 million in the half year to 30 June. Duncan Davidson, the chairman, said that Persimmon had increased its average profit per unit sold by 23 per cent to £9,009 in the first half of 1997.

Ofwat changes

IAN SYATT, Director General of Water Services, yesterday announced changes to water company licences, imposing a new regime whereby price reviews will take place automatically every five years, against the current reviews every 10 years. Ofwat has also deregulated the tariffs for large business customers using more than 250m litres of water a year so that water companies will no longer be able to recoup automatically from other customers any revenue they lose from reducing tariffs to these larger users.

Boeing response

BOEING, the US aerospace giant which recently lost a major aircraft order from British Airways, has replaced its commercial aircraft chief, Ron Woodward. The move comes after a year of poor profits and production delays which cost the company \$30m (£1.9m).

The new commercial aircraft chief is Alan Mulally, who led the launch of Boeing's 777 model range.

News Analysis: Southern and Scottish link may herald second merger wave

Pairing up for greater power

BY TERRY MACALISTER

SOUTHERN ELECTRIC yesterday became the last of the 12 UK regional electricity companies (RECs) to lose its independence, as plans for a near-£50n merger with Scottish Hydro-Electric were announced.

The deal could herald a second wave of industry re-structuring following the first when predominantly US groups bought in to the British energy supply sector.

The latest no-premium transaction would see Southern shareholders owning 55 per cent, with Scottish taking 45 per cent of a group called Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE).

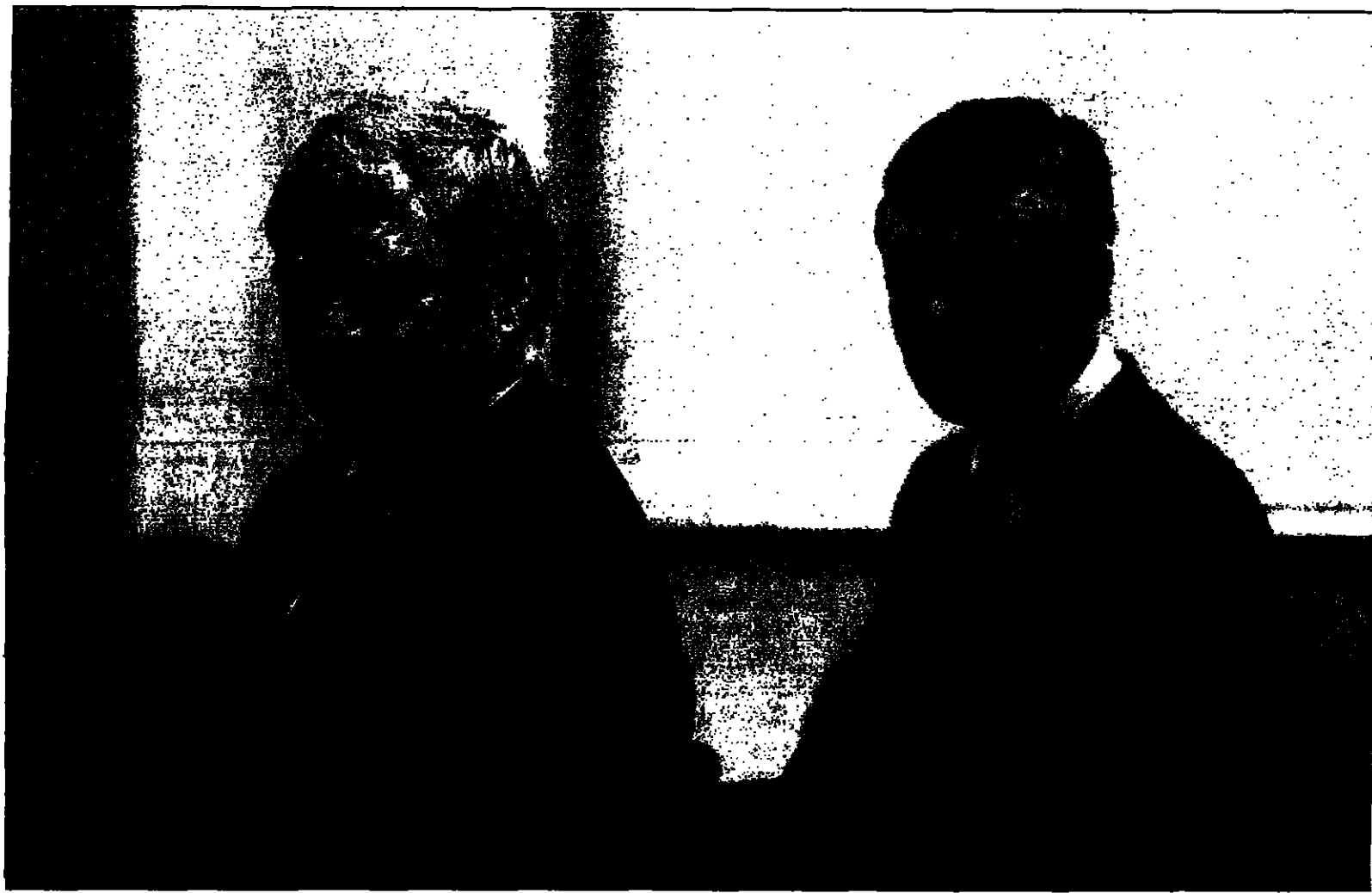
The all-share deal has yet to be approved by shareholders from both companies and industry regulators. Analysts say the merger should be approved by the authorities but said this could not be guaranteed.

Southern has failed to consummate previous proposed agreements with National Power and Southern Water after the government stepped in. But the latest deal was welcomed by the City, with Scottish shares rising 11.5p to 564p and Southern rising 4.5p to 565p.

Under the terms of the deal, Scottish shareholders will retain their shares and Southern shareholders will receive one new Scottish and Southern Energy share for every Southern Electric share. The new group will join the FTSE 100 index of Britain's leading firms with a market capitalisation of \$4.87bn.

Scottish shareholders stand to gain most initially because the new group will adopt Southern's dividend payments. This means a 22 per cent dividend increase for Scottish shareholders. But Southern has the top management positions, with its chief executive, Jim Forbes, taking the same title in SSE. His colleague, Ian Marchant, becomes finance director.

Boardroom squabbling for the top post was avoided because the Scottish chief executive, Roger Young, had already told colleagues he wanted to stand down next year. Mr Young, who like Mr Forbes is highly regarded by the City, will become joint deputy chairman



Jim Forbes of Southern (left) will head the merged group. Scottish, now led by Roger Young, will suffer fewer job losses

Neville Elder

of SSE. The chairman will be Lord Wilson of Scottish.

Southern is also likely to have the brunt of job cuts because SSE will be based in Perth at Scottish's headquarters rather than Southern's Maidenhead offices.

Mr Forbes says the new company will create more jobs in the long term as it has expansion plans, but analysts predict up to 800 jobs could go, mainly from Southern's 6,000 staff. Scottish employs half this number.

Cost savings will not just come from job losses: big benefits are expected from eliminating duplicated information technology and customer service costs. Management on both sides say they have also found that huge savings would be available from joint purchasing on capital expenditure.

HOW THE FINANCES STACK UP

Pro forma financial information, year to 31 March 1998

	SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	Scottish Hydro-Electric	Scottish and Southern Energy
£ Million			
Turnover	1,034.7	1,775.8	2,809.5
EBITDA	312.9	348.0	660.9
Operating Profit	246.7	290.1	536.8
Pretax Profit	213.1	248.7	461.8
Shareholder's Funds	942.8	898.5	1,639.3
Net Debt	490.0	288.0	778.0
Equity Market Capitalisation	2,172.0	2,700	4,872
Interest Cover	7.0 x	5.8 x	6.3 x

Mr Young said the deal would give Scottish the critical mass it did not have on its own with a combined customer base of 3.3 million and extra firepower for new acquisitions.

Mr Forbes made it clear that SSE can be expected to bid for coal-fired power stations

being sold off by PowerGen and National Power.

But a bid for London Electricity, long expected from both Southern and Scottish independently, looks less likely now. London's owner, Entergy, is known to be looking for a full price and should attract bids

from companies such as British Energy and Thames Water.

Senior management at SSE has told the Office of Fair Trading about its deal but said it was confident it would not be referred to the Mergers and Monopolies Commission.

Mr Forbes pointed out that Scottish has only 5 per cent of the generating market in England and Wales. He expects to hear by October whether the OFT plans a full examination.

But with PowerGen's planned takeover of East Midlands Electricity still awaiting government approval, analysts say that the Trade and Industry Secretary, Peter Mandelson, might call for a review of the sector. The Government has a small stake in Scottish so Mr Mandelson could intervene if he chose to do so.

In what could reinforce the new wave of consolidation, National Power is also expected to make a bid for either Yorkshire Electricity or Seaboard. The US companies which prompted the first wave of UK energy consolidation have begun to retreat.

Of the other 11 regional electricity companies set up at privatisation in 1990, seven are now in US hands and four have been taken into multi-utilities.

At the same time British companies such as PowerGen and the National Grid are openly chasing assets on the other side of the Atlantic as a first step towards globalisation.

Mr Forbes and Mr Young stressed that SSE's main focus at present is the UK market, but they held the door open for overseas ventures later on.

Abbey fined for unit trust blunders

BY ANDREW VERITY

ABBEY UNIT Trust Managers has been fined £150,000 and forced to pay out £440,500 after watchdogs discovered a series of blunders which caused it to create the wrong number of units in its unit trusts.

Inuro, the investment managers' watchdog, slapped the fine on AUTM for breaking six rules protecting customers from sloppy administration. More than 7,000 people were affected, 10 per cent of customers.

The watchdog found AUTM was late in getting cheques banked on time. It failed to carry out proper checks on a bank account meant for distributing money to holders of personal equity plans (PEPs). At one stage it let the account go £70,000 overdrawn.

AUTM created the wrong number of units in some of its unit trusts because it calculated the number of units bought on the wrong day, opening itself up to errors due to changes in share price. It also failed to execute customers' orders on time and lacked a proper mechanism for dealing with customer complaints. AUTM was also late in sending customers their money when they sold units.

The blunders took place in the back office of AUTM, which is owned by Lloyds TSB, in the 18 months between December 1995 and July 1997.

After offering a string of discounts on its unit trusts and PEPs, the company saw business mushroom. In early 1996, it grew to four times its normal level. But managers failed to identify basic failings in administration until late in the day.

A spokeswoman for AUTM said: "The situation was that whilst the management team were experienced they didn't have sufficient specialist PEP knowledge. Senior management were asking questions and the answer came back that they were coping."

The fine points to a worrying looseness of internal controls in administration of investment managers which can cost substantial sums.

Willis rises on counter-bid talk

AON, THE US broking giant, was yesterday the subject of strong speculation it would make a bid for its smaller British insurance rival, Willis Corroon, disrupting an agreed bid by KKR, the Wall Street acquisition specialist, writes Andrew Verity.

Shares in Willis Corroon rose 1p to 200.5p on a falling market, closing just above an offer of 200p made by KKR and a consortium of five insurance companies at end-July.

In a move widely interpreted as an attempt to fend off a counter-bid, Trinity Holdings, the acquisition vehicle for the KKR, gave notice last week it

would drop the number of acceptances required from 90 per cent to 50 per cent. The notice period required is four working days, effectively giving Aon until the end of today to put in a counter-bid. KKR has so far received 64 per cent acceptances.

Rumours of a counter-bid have been fuelled by the acquisition of Sedgwick, Willis Corroon's rival, by Marsh McLennan, its arch-competitor in the US, for £1.25bn.

At 200p, KKR is offering a premium of just 12 per cent to Willis Corroon's shareholders, while Marsh Mac's premium for Sedgwick is 25 per cent.

Wallis is named chairman of Therapeutic Antibodies

STUART WALLIS, the former Fisons chairman who has notched up four fortunes in three years, added a touch of snakebite to his career yesterday when he was named chairman of Therapeutic Antibodies.

The Anglo-American biotechnology company is best known for its anti-venom serum for snakebites, particularly those from rattlesnakes and the North American viper.

The appointment of Mr Wallis as non-executive chairman coincides with a boardroom clearout which sees the departure of seven directors, including some of the founders. The company, based in Ten-

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

nessee but listed in the UK, has also announced plans to move its domicile to London ahead of a planned fund-raising exercise.

"The likely place to raise money is in London and UK institutions like to see British companies run by a Brit," Mr Wallis said.

He added: "I really enjoyed my time at Fisons and I had been thinking I would like to get involved in the pharmaceutical sector again." He said Therapeutic Antibodies had become aware that its board was too large, unwieldy and expensive.

The seven directors to go include Professor John Landon, one of the company's founders.

Mr Wallis has enjoyed a terrific run of good fortune. He netted around £1m from his stake in Scholl, the footcare company, when it was sold to Seion Healthier in May. His stake in LLE, the Lloyd's List publisher, was worth around £2m when the group floated this year. He has also made substantial sums from the sale of Sheffield Forgemasters, the engineering group, and from the takeover of Fisons in 1995.

Shares in Therapeutic Antibodies closed 2.5p up at 77.5p. They were 263.5p last autumn.

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12 week				
Week	Jan	Start	End	End

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Footsie has another turbulent session

FOOTSIE SUFFERED another sharp slide yesterday, although the sea of red which threatened to drown the leading index after Monday's slump in the Dow turned out to be no more than a large pond.

After a morning of heavy losses driven by Wall Street's overnight fall and continued uncertainty on Russia's fate, Footsie regained some of its composure in the afternoon helped by a rebound in New York and a flight to quality by domestic institutions. At the end of a volatile session the blue-chip index closed down but not out, closing 80.3 points off at 5,169.1, after having been as much as 173.1 points lower.

Market watchers were relieved that the index had defied the gloomy predictions of the morning, but pointed out that the recent rout has put Footsie within a whisker of losing all the gains made in the year. The second-liners fared even worse, with the FTSE-250 closing at a year low of 4,627.5 after shedding 158.9 points, and the small cap hitting its all-time bottom at 2,047.4, a loss of 78.7 points.

Information technology and tele-

MARKET REPORT



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

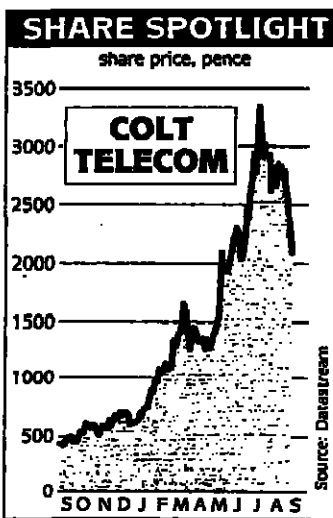
coms stocks, the bright stars of the recent bull market, took a pasting as traders took a dim view of their soaring ratings. Orange took the biggest tumble in the Footsie, shedding 13.7 per cent to 612.5p. Fellow mobile phone operator Vodafone was not far behind, plunging 11 per cent to 741p, while Colt Telecommunications suffered a setback in its bid to enter the blue-chip index, with the shares losing 46p to close at 2,110p.

Among IT stalwarts, Misy added another chapter to its topsy-turvy trading history in the Foot-

sie by losing 346p to 2,304p. Mid-cap IT stocks were also savaged, with ARM Holdings shedding 15.5 per cent to 177.5p, FT Group down 12.9 per cent to 1,462p and Sage 157.5p lower at 1,137p. Admiral, down 120p at 960p and Micro Focus, down 40p at 525p, also fell out of favour, while London Bridge, down 25 per cent to 900p showed that not even smaller stocks were immune from the IT bloodbath.

Banks were also on the receiving end of some selling. Barclays lost 78p after it surprised the market with a higher-than-expected Russian provision, while Alliance & Leicester shed 84p as the Stock exchange moved to rectify a rogue trade on Friday which had marked the stocks down.

The list of blue-chip risers read like a handbook of defensive stocks. Marks & Spencer, a traditional haven in times of crisis, was in demand, rising 26p to 541p, as Panmure Gordon went positive on general stores. The recommendation also helped Kingfisher and Boots. The owner of the do-it-yourself chain B&Q rose 28.25p to 518.25p, while the chemists business

SHARE SPOTLIGHT
share price, pence
COLT TELECOM
Source: Datastream

posted a healthy 38p rise to 1031. Food retailers were in evidence as investors scrambled for safe havens. Asda topped the FTSE risers, putting on 7.44 per cent to 180.5p as HSBC advised clients to go overweigh in food. Sainsbury was also in demand rising 17.5p to 532.5p, and Tesco followed suit with a 5p rise to 173p. GEC benefited from a lower

pound and a "long-term buy" advice from Merrill Lynch to soar 6 per cent to 416p. Shell was one of the few blue chips to rise on the back of old-fashioned takeover speculation rather than dealers' desire to shelter their books from a stock market collapse: the oil giant put on 3.4 per cent as the rumours of a tie-up with rival Texaco grew louder and louder.

Persimmon, the housebuilder, was also blissfully ignorant of global events, rising 4.6 per cent to 146p after a good set of results and an upbeat trading outlook. Scottish Hydro-Electric came up with an electrifying performance, putting on 12p to 564.5p, after announcing an all-share merger with rival utility Southern Electric. Shares in Southern lost 2p, ending at 558.5p. Other utilities put on good showing, with PowerGen rising 17.5p to 756.5p as traders warmed to its defensive qualities, and Scottish Power up 20.5p to 598p amid continuing speculation that it might bid for parts of Rascal.

Among the small-caps risers, Rubicon Group, the electrical engineering company, leaped 41 per

cent to 225p after agreeing to a £207m bid from the US group Applied Power.

Calderburn, a maker of office furniture and dealing rooms' desk rose 8.7 per cent to 44p as better-than-expected interim results prompted brokers to upgrade their forecasts.

Crestcare, the nursing homes operator, soared 5p after revealing that talks with a mystery bidder could lead to a 40p-a-share offer for the company.

Shield Diagnostics revelled in a 7.9 per cent rise to 512.5p after the US authorities approved its heart-attack test.

The battle for Dennis, the bus builder, took another twist as Mayflower, which is fighting Henlys for control, revealed it held 4.9 per cent of Dennis. Mayflower's shares fell 6.5p to 159.5p after the company announced it had bought a German car parts maker for £10.4m. Dennis shares lost 9p to 456p, while Henlys slid 9p to 229p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 800.8 million
SEAQ TRADES: 81,202
GILT INDEX: 97.4

PARALLEL PICTURES, an independent film maker based in the legendary Ealing Studios, debuts today on the junior Alternative Investment Market. Shares will be introduced to the screens at 32p, giving the company a market value of around £4.5m.

The title of Parallel's first major movie is unlikely to endear it to fund managers: the £5m tale of Victorian love featuring Full Monty star Robert Carlyle is *Poor Things*.

MMS PETROLEUM, the Dublin-based oil exploration company, rose 1p to 23.5p amid rumours that a predator is circling the AIM-listed outfit.

The stock has been trading below net asset value for some time and speculation is growing that a medium-sized oil company is keen to get its hands on MMS's contracts in Bulgaria and Romania. Hopes of a deal were boosted by the news that the specialist oil investor, Paul Curtis, raised his stake to 7.2 per cent.

Don't sell in haste - go looking for quality

HOW CAN investors best weather the market storm? Given some of the dire predictions of global recession and monstrous bear markets doing the rounds, worried investors may be contemplating getting out of equities altogether. For private shareholders, a high-interest savings account offering 7 per cent or more looks really attractive compared to plunging share prices.

But they should think twice. Shares have probably already suffered the worst of their falls. Those who decide to sell blindly now risk locking in their losses at the worst point.

This does not mean investors should be "buying the dips" as US investors have done so blithely. However, they can opt for quality - solid, ungeared companies relatively immune to a general slowdown or the threat of higher interest rates. Here are five to watch.

First is British Telecom (796p). Highly-rated telecoms stocks have come crashing down, but BT is built on solid foundations. Its alliance with AT&T will allow it to capitalise on growing demand for telecoms services, while its balance sheet, awaiting a £7bn (£4.2bn) cash injection, is robust.

The same goes for Glaxo Wellcome (1753p). Demand for the drug giant's products depends on its pipeline rather than economic spending. And there is always the prospect of a cost-saving mega-merger.

Food retailers are the other defensive stocks, as consumers are more likely to spend less in the pub or boutique before cutting back on supermarket shopping. The two groups with the best records in the past decade - Tesco (173p) and Marks & Spencer (541p) - look worthy of any investor's money.

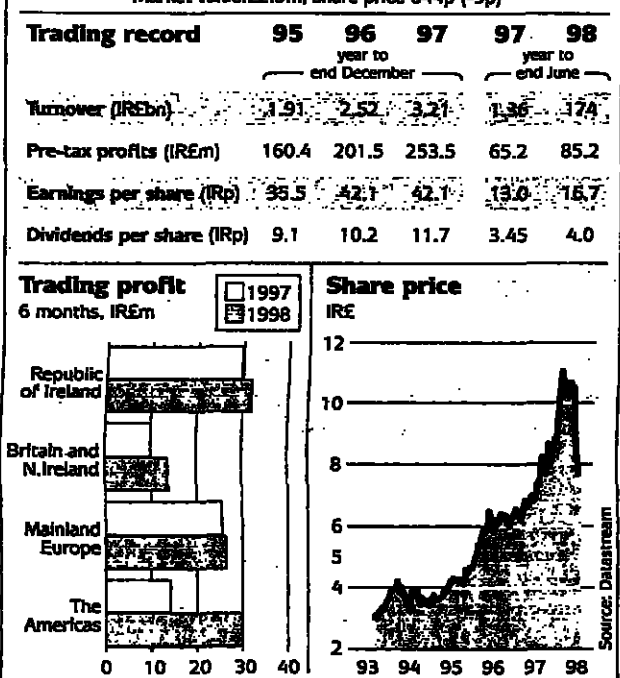
Finally, for a stock as close a proxy to cash as you will find in the UK, look at Associated British Foods (507p). Sir Gary Weston's group pays healthy dividends and is sitting on a huge cash pile. With values falling all around him, Sir Gary might also be able to snap up a few bargains.

INVESTMENT

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

CRH: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £2.9m, share price 644p (-5p)



CRH builds on robust results

CRH, the Irish building materials group, has seen its stock fall sharply this year from a high of just over £121 to £127.60 - down another 10p - yesterday on market woes. This seems harsh on a company that has proved a consistently solid performer with a share price which rose almost four-fold between 1993 and the start of the year.

Yesterday saw CRH deliver another robust set of results with half-year profits up 31 per cent to £128.5m and a cautious optimistic statement on the outlook.

CRH has proved adept at pulling off a string of "in-filling" deals and it feels the sharp fall in asset values as a result of stock market declines could help it find more suitable targets. Though it will concentrate in its core markets of Europe and North America, it is also

starting to consider South America and Asia as opportunities present themselves.

CRH spent £124.4m on acquisitions in the first half, including £120m on a collection of businesses in Britain, France, Belgium and the US. It now has an even spread of aggregates, bricks and distribution businesses across Ireland, North America and Europe.

In the US, market conditions are underpinned by the country's \$217bn (£130bn) six-year highways spending bill. This, together with acquisitions, helped profits double to £128.5m. There must be concern about the cycle turning, although CRH seems confident that any downturn will be relatively modest.

In Ireland demand is strong, although more competition could be coming as rivals seek planning permission for more aggregate quarries and European subsidies are likely to fall. Perhaps the biggest con-

cern is Britain, where the company admits that higher interest rates are starting to damp demand.

On full year forecast of £123.9m the shares trade on a forward multiple of 13 - a decent hold in troubled times.

Bunzl racks up paper profits

THE PAPER and packaging sector has not been the investors' favourite in the past year - and with good reason. The Asian crisis has hit demand and prices, while UK companies have struggled with the added disadvantage of the strong pound.

Bunzl has not been immune to these factors. Although the group does not make pulp or basic plastics, they are used heavily in its products. And falling input prices have forced Bunzl to cut its own prices. In the first half of the year, the group reckons that the combined effects of the strong pound and price deflation wiped more than 6 per cent off revenues.

As a result, Bunzl did well to keep underlying revenues and profits more or less flat. Meanwhile, the benefits of recent acquisitions - Bunzl has spent £165m in the past 12 months - helped boost operating profits by 16 per cent to £66.7m.

In this climate the chairman, Anthony Haggood, is reluctant to make predictions. But pulp and plastic prices should stabilise, so Bunzl will no longer have to run to stand still. Meanwhile, with one acquisition still to be fully integrated and plenty of scope for bolt-on deals - profits covered its interest bill 15 times in the first half - Bunzl should keep profits rising.

The shares - which shed 8p to 228.5p yesterday amid the general market shakeout - now stand on a multiple of just 12 times expected full-year earnings.

Bunzl will never be a go-go stock, but in an uncertain market investors will appreciate its solid fundamentals.

IN BRIEF

Positive outlook for Marshalls

MARSHALLS, the specialist concrete, stone and clay products group, reported a 66 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £19m in its first half to 30 June.

Christopher Burnett, the company chairman, said growing interest in gardens and the urban environment, and rising investment in schools and hospitals, led him to be positive about the outlook for Marshalls for the rest of this year. The shares closed down 4.5p at 105p.

Calderburn profit

PRE-TAX profits at Calderburn, which supplies dealing desks and fitted offices to the home and commercial markets, nearly doubled to £1.67m in the half year to 30 June.

The chairman, Christopher Moore, said that although the trading environment in the UK was becoming more difficult, the board remained positive on prospects for the year. The shares were up 3.5p at 44p.

BCH first half

BCH GROUP, the vehicle management group, reported a 30 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £19.3m in the half to 30 June. The chairman, Tony Mitchell, said the group's vehicle fleet increased from 14,422 vehicles to 15,234.

The expanded retail site in Bristol, which opened on 2 March, achieved operating profits of £225,000, said Mr Mitchell. The shares closed down 5p at 185.5p.

Eclipse shines

FIRST HALF pre-tax profits rose 10 per cent to £3.44m at Eclipse Blinds in the period to 30 June. Ted Black, who succeeded Hamilton Grossart as chairman, said the group expects further progress in the second half. The shares closed unchanged at 96.5p.

Software slump

SHARES IN the software provider London Bridge Software fell 31.25p to 900p yesterday despite increased pre-tax profits of £2.1m in the half year to 30 June, up from £1.4m in the period last year.

Thames Water is '3rd hole' for C&G retiree

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK



ANDREW LONGHURST, the urban former head of Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society, who guided C&G into the arms of Lloyds TSB, has just collected his third non-executive directorship since leaving the bank this spring.

Mr Longhurst has joined Thames Water, the company which is currently trying to decide whether it wants to become a broad-based utility by bidding for London Electricity. Plenty for Mr Longhurst to get his teeth into there.

In fact even his beloved golf has had to take a back seat following his so-called "retirement", so I'm told. His main non-exec role is at United Assurance, where he is due to become chairman on 1 October.

United Assurance has had a bumpy ride since it was formed by merging United Friendly and Refuge Assurance last year. Coincidentally United's new chief executive, who replaced George Mack, is Alan Frost, once of Lloyds Albany Life.

United, with assets of about £2bn, has been reducing its sales force, and Mr Longhurst will have his work cut out helping to improve morale at the group.

Mr Longhurst's third non-executive directorship is at Hermes Lens Asset Management (HLAM), a joint venture between the British Telecom pension fund and an American company, Lens. HLAM officially launches on 1 October.

Peter Butler, HLAM's chief executive, tells me that the fund aims to attract around £100m in institutional funds by the time of the launch. HLAM is "a shareholder activism fund which will invest in under-val-

ued companies, and work with their managements to improve value", says Mr Butler.

Hermes old boy and shareholders' champion Alastair Ross Goobey will be joint deputy chairman. Mr Butler is relatively new to the fund management world, having spent 20 years as a trouble-shooting finance director. In his time he has been found at Hi Tech Sports, British Sugar and Berisford, the latter during its workout phase.

Mr Butler says: "We're delighted that Andrew (Longhurst) has joined us in this exciting project".

STYLO, the family-owned shoe retailer based in Bradford, said yesterday that Alwyn Ziff has retired as an executive director. That still leaves Arnold Ziff as chairman, Michael Ziff as chief executive, and Alan Ziff, as executive director.

Stylo has an old-fashioned two-tier share structure, despite being shaken up recently by some share buying from

Guinness Peat Group. Perhaps HLAM should take a look.

ARSENAL HAVE always attracted more corporate supporters than most, and Hambros has always had rather a posh box at Highbury, with an elegantly painted sign on the door saying "Hambros".

Since the merchant bank's dismemberment and takeover by Societe Generale, however, I am distressed to report that the same corporate hospitality box now sports a tatty piece of paper on the door saying "Societe Generale".

Still, I suppose we should be pleased the French are keeping up the tradition. Perhaps this Gallic enthusiasm reflects the very French contribution to Arsenal's recent success - from the manager Arsene Wenger to World Cup heroes Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit.

But come on Soc Gen - get a decent sign for your box.

ANDREW BILES is joining Gerber Foods as chief executive, succeeding Zvi Cohen as head of the UK's leading maker of juice and dairy drinks.

In fact Mr Cohen's quarter of a century in the trade has won him the accolade of "Mr Juice". Retiring after his 60th birthday, Mr Cohen has built Gerber into a group that now produces brands ranging from Um Bongo to Ocean Spray. Gerber is a subsidiary of Hanover Acceptance Group.

Mr Biles, 46, was previously chief operating officer of Dole Europe and based in Paris. Dole is one of the world's largest fresh fruit 'n' veg companies, with sales of \$4bn.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES			
Country	Sterling	Dollar	D-Mark
UK	1.0000	0.5974	0.5985
Australia	2.8826	2.8701	1.7222
Austria	20.579	3.2585	1.7222
Canada	2.5377	59.767	36.065
Denmark	2.5977	2.5821	1.5490
France	11.124	1.095	1.4717
Germany	1.4839	8.9257	5.3245
Greece	9.823	9.768	1.7470
Italy	1.4839	2.9168	2.9005
Japan	502.54	506.12	300.30
Netherlands	12.967	12.995	13.900
New Zealand	1.0643	1.063	1.064
Portugal	209.97	299.27	29.723
Spain	16.654	16.654	16.654
South Africa	10.5115	10.5115	10.5115
Sweden	2.4078	2.3950	2.3725
Switzerland	1.6738	1.6738	1.6738

INTEREST RATES			
Country	3m	6m	12m
UK	7.50%	7.50%	7.50%
Germany	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
France	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Italy	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Spain	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Sweden	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Switzerland	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%

LIFE FINANCIAL FUTURES			
Contract	Settlement	High	Low
Long Call	111.65	112.65	111.50
Short Put	111.65	112.65	111.50
Long Put	111.65	112.65	111.50
Short Call	111.65	112.65	111.50

INDUSTRIAL METALS			
Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Aluminum	1000 lbs	1360.5	-1379
Copper	100 lbs	1630.0	-1632
Gold	1000 gms	339.50	-339.50
Iron	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Lead	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Nickel	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Platinum	100 gms	1415.00	-1415.00
Silver	100 gms	1415.00	-1415.00
Zinc	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00

OTHER SPOT RATES			
Country	Sterling	Dollar	D-Mark
UK	1.0000	0.5974	0.5985
Australia	2.8826	2.8701	1.7222
Austria	20.579	3.2585	1.7222
Canada	2.5377	59.767	36.065
Denmark	2.5977	2.5821	1.5490
France	11.124	1.095	1.4717
Germany	1.4839	8.9257	5.3245
Greece	9.823	9.768	1.7470
Italy	1.4839	2.9168	2.9005
Japan	502.54	506.12	300.30
Netherlands	12.967	12.995	13.900
New Zealand	1.0643	1.063	1.064
Portugal	209.97	299.27	29.723
Spain	16.654	16.654	16.654
Sweden	2.4078	2.3950	2.3725
Switzerland	1.6738	1.6738	1.6738

	Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer
Treasury Bills			7.35	7.25		
LIBOR			7.35	7.25		
Dominic Deposit	7.75	8.25	7.50	7.53	7.47	7.53
European Deposit	7.44	7.56	7.30	7.56	7.20	7.57
3 month			7.35	7.25		
6 month			7.31	7.41	7.30	7.27
1 year			5.10	5.47		
ECU Deposit			4.13	4.25	4.08	4.19
3 month					3.47	4.06

www.bloomberg.com/uk

Source: Bloomberg

LIFE FTSE 100 INDEX OPTION			
Series	Call	Put	Strike
100	111.65	111.65	111.65
200	111.65	111.65	111.65
300	111.65	111.65	111.65
400	111.65	111.65	111.65
500	111.65	111.65	111.65

AGRICULTURAL METALS			
Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Aluminum	1000 lbs	1360.5	-1379
Copper	100 lbs	1630.0	-1632
Gold	1000 gms	339.50	-339.50
Iron	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Lead	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Nickel	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00
Platinum	100 gms	1415.00	-1415.00
Silver	100 gms	1415.00	-1415.00
Zinc	100 lbs	1415.00	-1415.00

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SPORT

Ashes tour: Hick left out despite century at The Oval as off-spinner Such wins a surprise recall to England colours

Crawley
creeps into
final berthBY DEREK PRINGLE
Cricket Correspondent

THE FALL-OUT of the Oval Test has claimed its first prominent victim, though given time there may be others. So far the sniggers emanating from the Lucky Country, following England's 10 wicket defeat by Sri Lanka, have yet to reach these shores. When they do they will not be shared by Graeme Hick, who must now find an alternative to spending a hot winter Down Under.

Just five days after scoring his sixth Test century, Hick, widely tipped to secure a place on the forthcoming Ashes tour of Australia, has been left out of a 17-man squad. Instead, in a party that contained few surprises, other than the selection of the 34-year-old Essex off-spinner Peter Such, the berth falls to John Crawley, England's other centurion in the defeat by Sri Lanka.

Included in England's one-day squad for the Wills Trophy in Bangladesh, Hick will none the less be a disappointed man. Not many people have been dropped immediately after scoring a Test century – Geoff Boycott is one that springs to mind – and Hick's misfortune was to have Crawley, given an unexpected chance following Nasser Hussain's injury, score one as well. "The choice between Crawley and Hick was without doubt, one of the most

difficult decisions I've had to make as a selector," said David Graveney, who broke the news to Hick yesterday morning. "But doors open in strange ways and, in the end, together with the captain and the other selectors, we went with the player we thought would be more effective in Australia."

It is a curious reason and considering three of Australia's best bowlers, Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath and Jason Gillespie, are currently all coming back from injury, it would take a soothsayer of Nostadamus-like proportions to predict just exactly who England will be up against.

However, what is thought to have swayed it for Crawley, a man unlikely to start the Test series, is his ability to play spin, wrist or otherwise. No such dilemma will exist for Australia's batsmen, though, and England's slow bowling department, filled by Such and Robert Croft, is solely of the off-spinning variety. Unless pitches dictate otherwise, England's use of spin is likely to be a defensive one, though the rough created by Alan Mullally's follow-through, from left-arm over, may allow them to attack later in the game.

Going to Australia top heavy with off-spin has been tried before, most notably on the 1982-83 tour. Then three off-spinners, Geoff Miller, Eddie Hemmings and Vic Marks, were taken,

while Phil Edmonds, the Tufnell of his day, was left behind. A brilliant bowler, the decision to exclude Edmonds from that tour was not made on purely cricketing grounds. Asked yesterday if Tufnell had been similarly treated, Graveney denied the claim. "We decided to pick, in our opinion, the two best slow bowlers, in the country," he said. Such, for whom the 1998 domestic season for Essex is proving something of a nadir – he has 31 first-class wickets as compared to hauls of 56, 82 and 77 in his three previous years – last played for England in July 1994, 48 Test matches ago.

Long regarded as the best of his type in the country – a fact Graveney conceded when he said that if conditions were favourable he tended to bowl sides out – Such lost favour under Raymond Illingworth, who felt he was not mentally tough enough for Test cricket. If Illy's suspicions are right, and Australia will either confirm or disprove them, they are not shared by the current selectors.

As expected, England are taking a second wicketkeeper as well as a young fast bowler, Alex Tudor. But if Warren Hegg will keep wicket in most of the warm-up games – Stewart will not keep except in the Tests – Tudor is along primarily to look, listen and learn.

Following the confusion last winter over who picks the side, the team will be selected by a three-man panel – the captain, the coach, David Lloyd, and the tour manager, Graham Gooch. The move should avoid situations such as the one in Jamaica when Crawley – against the wishes of the selectors, who were elsewhere – played in front of Mark Ramprakash.

England's one-day squad for the Carlton and United series that follows the Tests will be named following the conclusion of the one-day tournament in Bangladesh and the World Super Six in Perth, where England are being led by Surrey's Adam Holoake and Gloucestershire's Mark Alleyne respectively. Alleyne's squad includes Yorkshire's Gavin Hamilton, whose eligibility to represent Scotland in next year's World Cup will now be annulled.

Michael Vaughan, an England Under-19 captain, will skipper the A side whose tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa leaves in January. Fourteen of the 15 A squad players have come through the Under-19 side, the odd one out being Jason Lewry, who came to cricket late.

The most pleasing aspect is the amount of quality pace bowlers. With Angus Fraser the wrong side of 32, much will be expected from the likes of Mervyn Dymally, Darren Thomas, Steve Harrison and Paul Hinton. With the A team now proving more effective than county cricket as a way to the top, their push for recognition starts the moment they get off the plane in Harare.



Alex Tudor, who was named in the Ashes tour party yesterday, with the England coach, David Lloyd

Empics

Overjoyed Tudor awaiting
the specialist's go-aheadThe young fast bowler needs to
prove his fitness to take his place
Down Under. By David Llewellyn

ALEX TUDOR would rather have made his way as a batsman. It is what he thinks he has always done best, what comes naturally to him. Unfortunately for him the 20-year-old Surrey player has been granted an

injury, things happen on tour and I will grab any opportunity that I get with both hands."

His former team manager David Gilbert, now with Sussex, knows Tudor as well as anyone and he said: "It's a wonderful opportunity for him. Although he can bat, he is a man who has that rare ability to bowl a very quick ball. The guy is genuine-

ly fast. If I have any concerns about him it is that he has proved himself to be very injury-prone and the hard wickets in Australia are very unforgiving. So he will have to be fitter than he has ever been in his life in order to come through it."

Gilbert added: "He consistently goes for four an over and bowls too many no balls and he must look to the Ashes tour to sort that out. If he conquers that then he should go to the top."

"He has a work ethic and pays great attention to his fitness. In fact we used to wonder whether he had his priorities right in the gym. He had the chest of an Adonis but we were

worried about his chicken legs."

The former England Under-19 fast bowler suffered from a chronic rib injury in 1996 and missed a chunk of the 1997 season as well. This year saw the Wandsworth youngster, who is as valuable with the bat to his club Spencer in the Surrey championship, start well but tail off as the stress fracture of the foot deteriorated.

But Tudor insisted last night: "The foot is fine and I can't wait to start running again. I have been in the gym on the rowing machine and the bike but I can't wait to go running around King George's Park in Wandsworth."

He planned to celebrate last night by having a few friends round. "I don't drink alcohol," Tudor explained. "But they will do my drinking for me. I have to stay fit."

OTHER SQUADS

ENGLAND

(Wills International Cup, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 24 Oct to 1 Nov)

A J Stewart (Surrey, capt)
M A Atherton (Lancashire)
N Hussain (Essex)
G P Thorpe (Surrey)
D Gough (Yorkshire)
D G Cook (Derbyshire)
W K Hegg (Lancashire)
M A Butcher (Surrey)
J P Crawley (Lancashire)
D W Headley (Kent)

ENGLAND A

(Four to Zimbabwe and South Africa)

M P Vaughan (Surrey, capt)
D L Moody (Leics, vice-capt)
A D Brown (Durham)
D R Brown (Warwick)
M A Atherton (Lancs)
N H Fairbrother (Warwick)
M V Fleming (Kent)
A P Oliver (Warwick)
G A Hick (Worce)
M P Hoggins (Warwick)
G D Lloyd (Lancs)
P J Marshall (Lancs)
R C Russell (Glouce)
C E W Silverwood (York)
Manager: D Graveney, Coach: D Lloyd

ENGLAND

(World Super Six, Perth, WA, 14 to 18 Oct)

M P Vaughan (Surrey, capt)
C J Adams (Surrey)
D L Moody (Leics)
P J Marshall (Lancs)
G A Hick (Worce)
M P Hoggins (Warwick)
M A Atherton (Lancs)
N H Fairbrother (Warwick)
J P Crawley (Lancs)
D W Headley (Kent)
Manager: P Hoggins, Coach: J B Embury

ENGLAND'S ASHES SQUAD

A J Stewart (Surrey, capt)	M R Ramprakash (Middlesex)
Age 35 Tests 85	28, 29
M A Atherton (Lancashire)	A R C Fraser (Middlesex)
30, 34	33, 44
N Hussain (Essex)	R D B Croft (Gloucestershire)
30, 34	28, 14
G P Thorpe (Surrey)	B C Holoake (Surrey)
29, 32	20, 2
D Gough (Yorkshire)	A D Mullally (Leicestershire)
27, 26	29, 9
D G Cook (Derbyshire)	A J Tudor (Surrey)
30, 0	20, 0
W K Hegg (Lancashire)	P M Such (Essex)
30, 0	34, 8
M A Butcher (Surrey)	Tour manager: G A Gooch.
26, 14	Coach: D Lloyd.
J P Crawley (Lancashire)	
26, 26	
D W Headley (Kent)	
28, 10	

BOWLING AVERAGES

	Overs	M	Runs	Wkts	Sw	10w	Best	Ave
A R C Fraser	1743.4	431	4607	173	13	2	8-53	26.63
D Gough	914.3	176	2891	104	4	0	6-42	27.79
D W Headley	324.5	50	1059	37	0	0	4-72	28.62
D G Cook	936.5	182	2953	94	5	0	7-43	31.41
A D Mullally	396.3	114	927	28	0	0	3-44	33.10
P M Such	362.5	100	805	22	1	0	6-67	36.59
R D B Croft	536.5	142	1254	34	1	0	5-95	36.88
B C Holoake	42.0	4	199	4	0	0	2-105	49.75
M R Ramprakash	95.1	13	308	3	0	0	1-20	101.00
M A Atherton	68.0	12	302	3	0	0	1-20	101.00
M A Butcher	32.0	6	83	0	0	0	0-0	0.00
A J Stewart	3.2	0	13	0	0	0	0-0	0.00
G P Thorpe	23.0	7	37	0	0	0	0-0	0.00

BATTING AVERAGES

	M	I	No	Runs	HS	100	50	Ave
A J Stewart	81	146	11	3552	150	11	28	41.55
G P Thorpe	52	95	11	1365	138	6	23	40.07
M A Atherton	84	155	6	5935	185	12	37	39.83
N Hussain	34	61	5	2033	207	7	6	36.30
A D Mullally	26	41	1	1243	156	3	7	34.52
J P Crawley	14	27	1	742	116	1	4	28.33
M A Butcher	29	51	3	1195	154	1	5	24.89
M R Ramprakash	25	39	5	595	59	0	2	18.03
R D B Croft	26	38	5	428	37	0	0	15.76
B C Holoake	2	4	0	44	24	0	0	9.57
A D Mullally	8	11	4	65	14	0	0	9.28
P M Such	10	17	4	111	31	0	0	9.53
D W Headley	44	64	13	380	32	0	0	7.45
A R C Fraser								

ASHES TOUR ITINERARY

OCTOBER 23: England team arrives in Perth. 24-28: Practice/competition. 29: v AUS Chairman's XI (Lanc. H). 31-3: West v Western Australia (Perth). NOVEMBER 7-10: v South Australia (Adelaide). 13-16: v Queensland (Cairns). 20-24: First Test (Brisbane). 28-2: Second Test (Perth). DECEMBER 5-8: v Victoria (Melbourne). 11-15: Third Test (Adelaide). 17-21: Prime Minister's XI (Canberra). 19-22: v Australia XI (Perth). 26-30: Fourth Test (Melbourne). JANUARY 1999: 2-6: Fifth Test (Sydney). 7: England party departs for UK (minus players selected for one-day competition).

Red card calls

Sir: The declining quality of commentating reached its nadir during the World Cup when the standard (especially on ITV) became, frankly, abysmal. I propose a new system that will entail a "commentating referee", who will give out yellow and red cards for various misdemeanours.

Cricket: each time the Test commentators venture off the subject of cricket on to, say, sheep dipping, they should be penalised.

Football: when the commentator shows no understanding of simple pronunciation techniques or appropriate patriotism, he should also be reprimanded.

If commentators receive two yellow, or a straight red, they should

be substituted by the producers immediately. This would enable more people to watch sport with the sound turned on.

DAVID WEBB (age 13)
Strettham, London

MCC members

Sir: My late father was, and my four brothers are, keen cricketers. My mother eschewed sports but I embraced them. At the ripe age of 28 I have, perhaps, peaked as a spin bowler and am

but an average batsman. I play for a local, friendly team where I am accepted as an "honorary" man.

Growing up in a male-dominated household, the activities and bawdy talk of the changing-room did not faze me. While I cannot imagine that the delicate flowers of the Barbara Cartland persuasion would ever wish to be members of the MCC, some women do. I am a size 12, wear make up, am heterosexual, non-radical and non-hirsute. I hope that the members of the MCC will allow me to join them,

preferably before I reach retirement age.

SYLVIA RIVERS
Woking, Surrey

Spin sinner

Sir: Excuses, excuses, yet again. Whenever the England cricket team performs badly (very often in the past 12 years) there is an excuse. This time it is the legitimacy of Muttiah Muralitharan's action, questioned by David Lloyd. With a string of

Test series defeats and the inability to elevate England to parity with all other Test-playing nations, Lloyd is quick to pass judgement on a spin bowling sensation.

He should admit that England's batsmen lack the talent to counter such spin and England's spinners the ability to spin the ball. Lloyd should learn from Muralitharan about the art of off-spin and not to criticise his efforts.

HAREEN MARCELLINE
Dyce, Aberdeen

Sir: We were dismayed to hear David Lloyd's ill-judged comments about the bowling action of Muttiah Muralitharan. The Sri Lankan has been harassed by an Australian umpire and scrutinised by the International Cricket Council. His action has been ruled legitimate, and he has demonstrated that he is, as England's captain, Alec Stewart, has said, a class above any other off-spin bowler in the world.

For two decades, Sri Lanka's Test cricketers have borne

England's patronising attitude with good humour, letting their charm and skill on the field speak for them. They are world champions at the one-day game, and have proved themselves able to take on the world at the five-day game. Next time they grace this country with a Test tour, let them have three or five matches, and let Mr Lloyd keep his sour-grape flavoured prejudice to himself.

TOM AND ROSHI SAUL
London SE26

Sir: The reaction of David Lloyd to magnificent Muralitharan's memorable performance was most unfortunate and is not cricket at all. I do not think he should continue to coach the England side. He should be given the red card promptly.

RICHARD KARUNAJARAJAN
Toronto, Canada

Waiting goes on for Maynard

CRICKET

BY JOHN COLLIS
at Hove

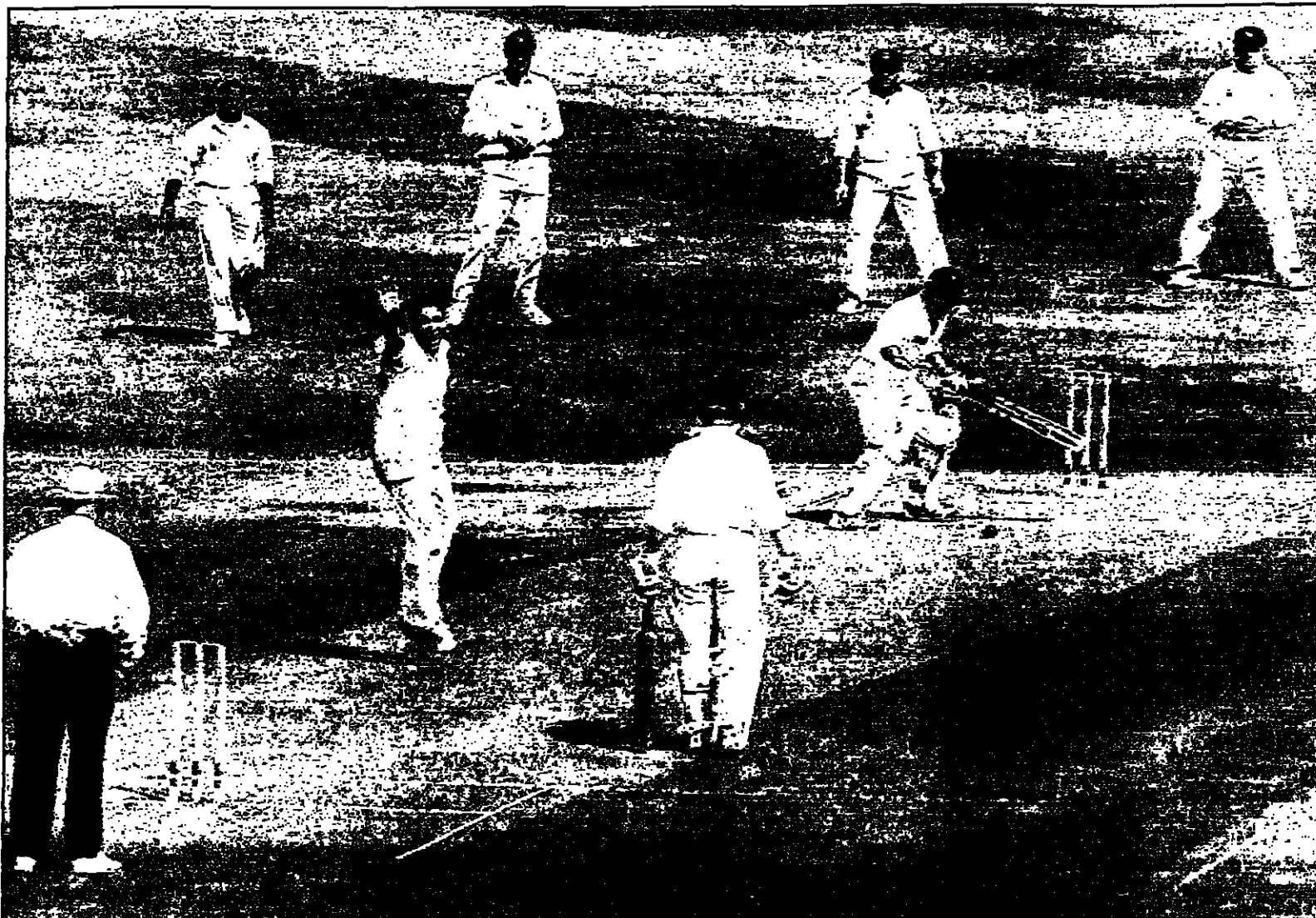
Sussex 332
Glamorgan 353-8dec

MATTHEW MAYNARD is still seeking his first century of the season — the last time he reached three figures was at Taunton almost a year ago when Glamorgan secured the Championship. Against Sri Lanka in July he fell one run short, and yesterday a ton was his for the taking when he set off for a tight second run and lost out to Robin Martin-Jenkins' throw from the square leg boundary.

But, while it lasted, the 109-ball innings, adorned with 16 fours and a wristy, effortless six over mid-wicket off Martin-Jenkins when the Glamorgan batsman had barely taken guard, was vintage Maynard.

A quartet of boundaries followed in the tall seamer's next over, so the run-out was belated but sweet revenge. Maynard has an unfussy, self-contained elegance, all timing and power placement with no need of elaborate flourishes, a style as close-cropped as his hair. Tony Cottee contributed just a quarter of the runs to their hundred partnership but he never seemed beleaguered — it is just that there was not an awful lot for him to do.

The Sussex innings did not detain Glamorgan long in the morning. Jason Lewry, the brisk left-arm bowler who had a season's bag of 60 wickets before this match, awoke to the news that he had been selected for England's A tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa, and reflected that a two-week family holiday was the closest he had come to such an overseas campaign in



The Glamorgan opener, Alun Evans, survives a determined appeal from the Sussex bowler, James Kirtley, at Hove yesterday Peter Jay

the past. He was perhaps still in a state of pleasurable shock when he snicked his fellow-tourist Darren Thomas, the most productive of Glamorgan's pace men, and Nick Wilton soon followed.

A composed start to the Glamorgan reply was established by Wayne Law, three days short of his 20th birthday, and Alun Evans, but immediately after lunch they departed in the space of three balls.

Once Adrian Dale had given Lewry a celebratory wicket the scene was set for Maynard, and after his dazzling afternoon display Cottee assumed responsibility in Glamorgan's attempt to take their score

beyond the Sussex total of 332. Cottee has had a mixed season with the bat — centuries against Northamptonshire and Durham have been qualified by sequences of modest scores. He pressed on in fading light and

a further useful partnership ended when Mike Powell miscued a pull to give Lewry another scalp. Cottee was finally snapped up for 91 by Martin Jenkins, but Glamorgan got the lead they wanted.

Clubs claim stairway to elite status

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

ALL BUT one of the five clubs who could win the First Division's Grand Final later this month will press ahead with an application to join Super League. Wakefield Trinity, Dewsbury, Featherstone and Swinton are all going into the play-off series, which starts this weekend, committed to claiming a place among the elite if they win on 26 September.

"This division is still the pathway to Super League," Bob McDermott, chairman of the First and Second Division Association, said. "Clubs have the chance to demonstrate that, if they win the Grand Final and can meet the criteria laid down, a place in Super League is the right and just reward."

However, McDermott's own club, Dewsbury, in third place after the end of the league programme on Sunday, will not try to force their way into the top division even if they win the Grand Final at Huddersfield, because their ground fails to meet the standards required.

"We have to treat this as a valuable competition and well worth winning in its own right," the Dewsbury coach, Neil Kelly, said. "Our aim is to win the competition and what happens off the field is not our concern."

The other four, including the leaders Wakefield, who would have to move to meet the stadium criteria, have their chances of elevation enhanced by the addition of Gateshead to

Super League. It will stand 13 clubs, improving the prospects of the First Division winners achieving promotion.

"We would all certainly do better than Gateshead at the moment, because we've got more players than them," the Featherstone coach, Steve Simms, said. "We all need three or four players to be able to compete in Super League."

The Grand Final, which will pre-date Super League's version by a month, is to be shown live on Sky and in front of what Fassa hopes will be a crowd of more than 10,000. The association is also to look into the possibility of a televised competition in November or April, outside the present summer season. Talks are going on with both Granada/Yorkshire and the BBC, said McDermott.

There could be more ructions in the "other business" section of today's meeting of the Rugby League Council, with clubs ready to complain about the cost of sending three men to Sydney for the recent international meeting. The League, meanwhile, is likely to be critical of Fassa and Super League's attacks on its chairman, Sir Rodney Walker. Of greater significance is the need for a reorganisation of next season to leave room for international rugby in October.

Salford have signed the Bradford second rower Simon Knox on loan for the rest of the season, while Leeds are close to signing the former Great Britain hooker Lee Jackson from Newcastle Knights.

Smith keeps title-chasers in hunt

BY HENRY BLOFIELD
at Edgbaston

Leicestershire 190-6
v Warwickshire

THE RAIN, which came in two parts, allowed a meagre ration of 48 overs here and Warwickshire will have been happier with the outcome than the Leicestershire aspirants, Leicestershire. A pitch which allowed a certain amount of lateral movement saw the Warwickshire seamers pick up six wickets against some not es-

pecially distinguished batting.

The manner of the dismissals did little to suggest that Leicestershire has a chance of winning the title, not that the Warwickshire bowling was that impressive either, as Ben Smith showed. In a delightful innings, he took full advantage of all the many long-hops that came his way to reach his 50 from 61 balls with nine fours, most of them from square cuts, and was 82 not out at the close.

Smith is one of several players in a list, which must be topped by Ed Giddins, to har-

bour at any rate a mild grievance that he has not been selected for any of the touring parties announced in sepi- chural tones yesterday morning by David Graveney. Smith has had an excellent second part of the season and is a tiger in the field too.

On cricketing grounds, Giddins has every reason to feel hard done by and he showed his character at Edgbaston by not allowing the sad news to affect him. He bowled 10 overs straight off, took Darren Maddy's wicket for 27 runs and

might have had a couple more. In the sixth over, Vince Wells played back, followed a short one from Doug Brown and was caught behind. Iain Sutcliffe might have been caught at short leg when he first came in but then produced a flurry of delightful fours as he square cut and drove. The score was 21 when Maddy shuffled across his stumps to Giddins and departed low when the ball cut back.

It had progressed to 47 when Sutcliffe turned a ball from Tim Munton off his hip without taking the precaution of keep-

ing it down and was well caught at backward short leg. Six runs later, Phil Simmons who must have been thinking about something else, played forward to a very wide one from Munton and was caught behind.

Smith and Aftab Habib now got on the square-cutting and pulling strokes before Habib went back and steered Brown to first slip as if he was giving catching practice. It then rained again leaving time for only nine more overs in which Paul Nixon edged Munton low to Nick Knight at second slip.

Sri Lanka earn more Tests with England

FOLLOWING THEIR historic 10-wicket triumph at The Oval on Sunday in the one-off Test match, Sri Lanka can look forward to the prospect of more Tests against England in the coming years.

Sri Lanka surged to their first Test victory in this country when their off-spinner, Muttiah Muralitharan, recorded the fifth best match haul in Test history of 16 for 220.

It is only the fourth Test played by Sri Lanka in this country since they became a Test-playing nation 17 years ago but their growing reputation, underlined over the last five days, has been rewarded by a better deal with England.

Three Tests are planned for England's 2000-2001 tour of Sri Lanka and the likelihood is that the Sri Lankans will have more than one Test here in 2002. The two teams have so far met six times, all in one-off Tests.

Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, India and Zimbabwe have already played at least one three-Test series against Sri Lanka, and West Indies have played them in a two-Test series.

Sri Lanka have become a greater force in Test matches through formidable batting and a varied spin attack, with Muralitharan the jewel in their slow bowling crown.

Muralitharan is Sri Lanka's most successful bowler and his 7 for 155 and 9 for 65 at The Oval brought his tally to 203 wickets in 42 Tests. He has now taken 68 Test wickets in 1998 — next is Allan Donald of South Africa who has 66 — and has taken five wickets in an innings at least once against seven of the eight other Test teams — Australia being the only exception.

Cricket Scoreboard

Warwickshire v Leicestershire

EDGBASTON (Day 1 of 4): Leicestershire (10 pts) have scored 182 for 6 wickets against Warwickshire (2 pts).

Leicestershire won toss.

LEICESTERSHIRE — First Innings

Runs 6s 4s Bts Mins

V J Wells c Phipps b Brown 22 0 0 11 19

D L Maddy bowled b Giddins 9 0 2 28 32

I J Sutcliffe c Brown b Munton 24 0 5 28 34

P A Nixon c Knight b Munton 22 0 1 46 100

P R Brown not out 22 0 1 46 100

C Lewis not out 22 0 1 46 100

Extras (b1 nb14) 15

Total (for 6, 57.1 overs) 182

Wicket (for 6, 42.5 overs) 123

Fall: 1-4, 2-12, 3-49, 4-127

To Bat: R C Russell, M C Ball, J Lewis, A M Smith, C A Walsh

Bowling: F A Rose 14-2-5-45, J P Taylor 14-6-28-1, D Fother 8-1-24-2, K M Curran 2-0-13-0, J P Brown 4-1-17-0

Umpires: J W Holder and J F Steele

Somerset v Worcestershire

TAUNTON (Day 1 of 4): Somerset (4 pts) are trailing Worcestershire (1 pt) by 204 runs with 9 first-innings wickets in hand

Worcestershire won toss

WORCESTERSHIRE — First Innings

Runs 6s 4s Bts Mins

W P C Weston c Treacothick b Caddick 8 0 0 20 27

A Hafeez c Treacothick b Caddick 4 0 0 32 44

S J Rhodes c Bower b Caddick 44 0 8 130 156

V S Solanki bowled b Caddick 27 0 5 76 115

D A Leathdale b Caddick 27 1 11 146

IS J Rhodes c Bower b Caddick 0 0 0 2 1

R J Llewellyn c Turner b Caddick 56 0 10 74 97

R K Hughes not out 16 0 1 25 38

D Catterall c Harden b Caddick 0 0 0 4 1

R J Chapman c Turner b Jones 0 0 0 9 10

Extras (b5 nb6) 7

Total (86.5 overs) 224

Fall: 1-12, 2-13, 3-102, 4-109, 5-109, 6-131, 7-188, 8-217, 9-217

Bowling: A R Caddick 31-13-64-8, G D Rose 22-10-62-0, S Jones 12-5-25-2, M E Treacothick 9-2-28-0, K A Parsons 2-0-6-0, A R K Pearson 10-1-32-0

SOMERSET — First Innings

Runs 6s 4s Bts Mins

A R K Pearson not out 1 0 0 14 23

P C L Holford bowled b Haynes 8 0 1 22 23

M Burns, G D Rose, R J Turner, A R Caddick, S Jones

Bowling: R J Chapman 3-0-12-0, G R Haynes 3-2-5-1, Umpires: J C Balderson and G Burgess

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The day the Pini dropped at Richmond

Outspoken Australian full-back did not curb his tongue when things went wrong. Now he can see a bright future. By Tim Glover

MIDWAY THROUGH last season Richmond made the short journey to meet Harlequins in the Premiership and by half time had collapsed like a cardboard cut-out.

"I was beginning to wonder what on earth I'd let myself in for," Matt Pini, Richmond's Australian full-back, said. "That was the lowest of the low." It may only have been a couple of miles to The Stoop but for Richmond it almost amounted to a voyage of discovery. "People were affected by that defeat and some felt guilty about it," Pini said. "We had to hit that low in order to rebound."

It was time for a few home truths. The forwards were encouraged to talk about the backs and the backs about the forwards and Pini did not hold back. "I don't know whether I made too many friends at that time. I was quite vocal. I had something to say and I said it but I'm not sure many people liked it. On paper we had a very impressive squad but there was no consistency. I felt that some of the big names were letting themselves and the club down. The commitment wasn't there. They were cruising along and had no desire to play. They didn't turn up on time for training and even the way they dressed was sloppy. It was not what I expected. The first three or four months were very poor. I was disappointed with the skill level and the training methods."

The signs are that the heart to heart was a watershed for Richmond. To take a hammering is one thing; to take a hammering from Harlequins is something else altogether. After winning their last six games, Richmond climbed to fifth in the table. "In the professional era a misapprehension is that you have to train and train and train," Pini said. "More is not always better. Players need to peak on a Saturday not a Thursday. Once we addressed a few things the team started to gel and play well. The performances went up by about 100 per cent. My feeling now is that I couldn't have joined a better club."

John Kingston, the Richmond coach, regards Pini as the best full-back in England. Quick and elusive, he is central to the club's attack and will be the first name pencilled onto the team sheet when Richmond play the champions, Newcastle, at their new home, the magnificent Madejski Stadium, near Reading, on Saturday. "This time the attitude is completely different," Pini said.

Unfortunately for Richmond, Kingston is not the only man who rates Pini and, in an extraordinary development, a player once regarded, briefly, as the best full-back in Australia is about to spend part of the winter playing for Italy and will almost certainly feature in the World Cup qualifier against England at Huddersfield on 22 November.

'I don't know whether I made too many friends. I had something to say and I said it, but I'm not sure many people liked it.'

The Pini clan, as he puts it, originated from Grosio in Lombardy before emigrating to Australia. Pini, who learned rugby as well as Aussie Rules football in Canberra before moving to Brisbane, has two passports, Italian as well as Australian. When he recently played for a side called the Penguins in Croatia, Roy Bish, a former Welsh coach, noticed the Italian passport and a phone call to Rome resulted in Pini spending a weekend in Italy with the Italian rugby authorities a fortnight ago.

"The whole thing is amazing," Pini said. "I'd never given the Italian connection a thought. They're very keen to see me play and I'd love to play for them. We'll just have to see if they think I'm good enough."

In his early teens, Pini spent weekends playing both RU and Aussie Rules before being capped by the Australian schoolboys and the under-21 side. After moving to Brisbane he played for Queensland and

made his international debut in the 33-13 defeat of Ireland in 1994. The same season he played for the Wallabies against Italy.

Pini went to South Africa for the 1995 World Cup as Australia's first choice full-back, but was displaced by Matt Burke following the defeat by the Springboks in the curtain-raiser in Cape Town.

When Pini subsequently lost his place in the Queensland side - "their coach, in his wisdom, preferred the centre Tim Horan at full-back" - he was going to retire and return to his day job as a plumber. Then the phone rang.

An agent in Brisbane, a friend of Pini's wife Rebecca, told him of a club in England that needed a full-back. Pini rang Bob Dwyer, the former Australian coach who was then in charge at Leicester, for advice. "I knew nothing about Richmond but, as it happened, Bob said that he was also looking for a full-back so suddenly I had a choice. I opted for Richmond basically because Rebecca's parents were married there and it's close to London."

With big sponsorship from the American computer giant, the Oracle Corporation, a new state-of-the-art stadium, a revitalised squad that promises to work the oracle, and an international career that looks as if it is about to be resurrected at the age of 29, Pini (who is currently learning Italian) says he has no regrets. Well, perhaps one.

He and Rebecca, who has just landed a job as a film producer with Columbia Pictures, had to put their dog Enya, a two-year-old Rottweiler, in quarantine for six months at a kennels near Heathrow airport. "That shook us a bit," Pini said. "It's a silly law because Australia doesn't have rabies. Effectively she served an unnecessary jail sentence but it's good money for somebody."

After paying £300 a month, the Pinis were reunited with Enya at their Twickenham apartment on Christmas Day. "At least it showed Richmond that I was completely committed to the club," Pini said.



Matt Pini is happy to be re-united with his pet Rottweiler Enya, who spent six months in quarantine at Heathrow

Robert Hallam

Burke's broadside for Bristol

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

BRISTOL suffered a body blow yesterday when Paul Burke, their Ireland international fly-half, announced he was leaving. Burke has signed for Cardiff, where he will be reunited with his half-back partner for the last two years, the scrum-half Robert Jones.

The once shipshape Bristol looked to have hauled themselves clear of the rocks before setting out on the voyage back into Allied Dunbar Premiership One. Burke had been earmarked for the captaincy and his skills and nous were regarded as essential if Bristol

were to bounce straight back into the top flight.

However, a decision to offer the players contracts only until Christmas - effectively putting them on a four-month trial - persuaded Burke to go.

Burke, who has scored 103 points in 10 international appearances, said: "I feel let down. I had kept Bristol fully informed about the situation with Cardiff, but I was told the club were not in a position to offer me anything other than a four-month, holding contract. That did not give me enough security and I wasn't happy about it."

"The enthusiasm Cardiff showed in contrast to Bristol's

attitude made my decision very easy. Cardiff are a very big club and want to do well in the British League when it comes about. It doesn't bother me that I will be playing friendlies this season."

Burke, who joined Bristol two years ago after spells with Cork Constitution and London Irish, will be in contention for the fly-half berth with Lee Jarvis, but could well feature in the opening friendly of the season at Bedford on Saturday.

Burke's departure leaves Bristol with no recognised goal-kicker and it is expected that the veteran Paul Hull will move up to half-back and take responsibility for the kicking.

Bob Dwyer, Bristol's new director of rugby, has now seen a third of last year's side - including the Irish internationals David Corkery and Kevin Maggs, as well as the wing David Tueti - quit the Memorial Ground.

It is an unhappy time for another Burke, Australia's fullback Matt. He expects to be out of action for at least seven months after dislocating his shoulder when scoring the winning try during last Saturday's Bledisloe Cup victory over New Zealand. A specialist has told Burke that his right shoulder will need complete reconstruction.

The deadlock between

Twickenham and the First Division clubs over the proposed scheduling of the Anglo-Welsh friendlies is expected to be resolved at tomorrow's meeting of the Rugby Football Union's management board. Swansea are to go ahead with Saturday's friendly against West Hartlepool despite being told not to do so by the Welsh Rugby Union.

The South African RFU has appointed Silas Nkanunu as its first black president. The 66-year-old lawyer and former Saru vice-president was the only nominee for the post vacated by the controversial Louis Luyt in May.

Russians act to ease Moscow safety fears

ATHLETICS

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS yesterday gave assurances that there will be no safety problems for participants in Saturday's Grand Prix final in Moscow. Their comments came after around 50 leading athletes signed a petition last week calling for the prestigious, end of season meeting to be moved to "a more serene venue" in view of the economic and political crisis enveloping Russia.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation, the sport's world governing body, has insisted the event will go ahead as planned at Luzhnik Olympic Stadium. However, it is not clear how many of the 180 athletes will choose to miss the competition.

"I can understand those who expressed safety concerns about coming to Moscow," Valentin Balaknichev, the president of the Russian athletics federation, said. "But I can assure you and everyone else that personal safety will not be a factor here."

Claiming Moscow is safer than many other track venues around the world, he said the athletes had been unduly influenced by alarmist coverage of the Russian crisis. "I have to remind you that it was in Atlanta, not Moscow, where during the 1996 Olympics a bomb exploded in the Olympic park," Balaknichev said.

He admitted that the economic crisis has caused problems in organising the meeting. On Monday the electricity and telephones at the federation's offices were cut off because of unpaid bills.

The European triple jump champion, Jonathan Edwards, still hopes he can compete for the Great Britain men's team

in the IAAF World Cup in Johannesburg on 11-13 September despite a heel injury.

The pole vaulter Nick Buckfield has failed to recover from the hip injury he suffered in the European Championships in Budapest and he is replaced by Mike Edwards.

The Romanian Olympic authorities have decided to impose life bans on athletes failing doping tests at meetings or even during training sessions, according to a senior local Olympic official.

"The Romanian Olympic Committee will ban any competitor involved in any sort of

doping activity as from 1 January, 1999," the COR vice president, Cristian Gatu, said.

Gatu said the decision, adopted on Monday, would apply to anyone associated with the offence, including athletes, doctors, coaches and managers.

"Sport performances have to be a clean activity, something to enable Romanian children to identify with our great Olympic, world, European and national champions," Gatu said.

Since the fall of communism in 1989, Romanian athletics au-

thorities have imposed bans of two years to life on 15 world and Olympic medalists.

Long distance runners have been especially hit, including Iulia Negura, Elena Murgoci, Elena Fidatov and Andreea Burilacu. In 1994, two weightlifters were banned for failing tests.

Gatu said the COR would ask Romania's Sports and Youth Minister to issue an order extending the ban to all Romanian national teams.

"Sport activity cannot be led or determined by external factors like drugs," Gatu said.

Tyson 'restrained' after traffic incident

BOXING

FORMER WORLD heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson was treated and released from a Maryland hospital after a minor traffic accident nearly turned into a fist fight, local police officials said.

Montgomery County police received calls from witnesses after Tyson's green Mercedes, driven by his wife, collided lightly with another vehicle in Gaithersburg, Maryland, on Monday evening.

Police spokesman Derek Bailey said that callers claimed Tyson "appeared as if he wanted to fight the driver of the other car" and had to be restrained

by his wife and bodyguards travelling in a vehicle behind him. The other driver was identified only as an adult male.

"After everybody cooled down, they saw that it was really just a minor traffic accident," he added.

Police arrived after Tyson had left, but pulled him over a few minutes later. While they were talking with him he complained of chest pains and was taken to Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. He was later released.

Tyson is awaiting a hearing in Nevada on his application to regain his licence to box, which was revoked after biting Evander Holyfield's ear more than a year ago.

Schumacher eyes accord

MOTOR RACING

BY DERICK ALLSOP

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER is seeking a peace formula with David Coulthard today in the wake of their angry confrontation at last Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix.

Schumacher wants to speak to Coulthard in private at Monza, where teams are testing, and avert the escalation of a conflict that could have catastrophic consequences at the next race, the Italian Grand Prix, on Sunday week.

Coulthard claims he was accused by the Ferrari driver of trying to kill him when their cars collided. The incident cost Schumacher the race and the

leadership of the championship, which was retained by the Scot's McLaren-Mercedes team-mate, Mika Hakkinen.

The race stewards rejected Ferrari's contention that Coulthard deliberately slowed and caused their driver to run into the back of the McLaren, but Schumacher remains unconvinced. If Coulthard is prepared to shoulder some of the responsibility for the crash, the German will make a public apology for his subsequent behaviour.

Although Coulthard is adamant he did nothing wrong, he has already said he is willing to discuss the matter "man to man" and realises a political compromise could help ease the plight of his team during the

run up to a race in Ferrari's homeland.

Both men will recognise also that as officials of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, they are duty bound to set an honourable example.

McLaren are considering what security measures to put in place for the race but a declaration of peace with the Ferrari camp would be the best insurance of all.

The fateful coming together on Sunday is still puzzling leading figures in Formula One. Bernie Ecclestone, the sport's impresario, said: "Schumacher is not the type of driver who would normally make a mistake like that. It seemed to me there was something strange about it."

Stephens looks set to compete at Games

CYCLING

NEIL STEPHENS is expected to take his place at this month's Commonwealth Games despite being kicked out of the Tour de France when his team became embroiled in a doping scandal.

The International Cycling Union (UCI) yesterday urged national federations to be tough on cyclists thrown out of the Tour. The UCI has told those who had riders implicated in the Tour drug scandal that they had until 13 September to decide on sanctions.

The Commonwealth Games start on 11 September, and Stephens has been selected in Australia's road race team. Cycling Australia's chief

executive, Graham Fredericks, had asked the UCI for more information about the Festina case. "Until there are formal charges laid against Neil, really there is nothing we can do," he said.

Richard Virenque, a leading French rider, has admitted to police investigating the Tour de France drugs affair that he had taken banned medication, despite earlier denying ever having done so.

Francesco Casagrande, the fifth-ranked rider in the world, has been suspended for six months by the disciplinary commission of Italy's professional league because he twice tested positive for banned substances.

Dixon's comeback complete

EQUESTRIANISM

BY GENEVIEVE MURPHY

KAREN DIXON, who has made a gallant fightback after breaking a leg and damaging knee ligaments last year, has won a place on the Great Britain three-day event squad for next month's World Equestrian Games.

Dixon is the most experienced of the six riders named yesterday, after a succession of problems ruled out all those on the winning team at last year's European Open Championships. She has already ridden in three Olympics and this will be her third World Games.

Dixon will be joined by Kristina Gifford, also a winner at the World Games in 1994. Gary Parsonage's Olympic mount, Magic Rogue, is another great performer across country who has improved in the dressage thanks to lessons with the Olympic rider, Richard Davison. Polly Philipps on Coral Cove, Anne-Marie Evans on Dutch Treat and the talented 23-year-old Jeanette Brakewell on Over to You complete the squad.

Chances have been weakened by the absence of the European Championship riders: Mary King (expecting her second child), plus Christopher Bartle, William Fox-Pitt and Ian Stark, whose best horses are sidelined through injury. GB squad, Digest, page 23

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



The mall that ate Manchester

The skyline is dramatically changing, and the Mick Hucknalls of this world are already benefiting from investments in new enterprises.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Tax and poverty

Sir: It is a relief to read that the Fabian Society has a Commission on Taxation and Citizenship which intends to shift the debate about taxation off the Thatcherite terrain where taxation is a form of theft of income rightfully belonging to individuals ("Tax and win, say Fabians", 1 September). That propaganda has resulted in the rich getting substantially richer and the poorest experiencing a real reduction in their incomes and life expectancy since about 1985.

The costs to the taxpayer of social dislocation, ill health and the decline in average reading standards, unexplained by teaching methods, in deprived areas of our cities is immense. An income which cannot provide an adequate diet is no platform for a good education.

The poor in the UK need more money. The question is how much is enough. The Commission should consider the adequacy of benefits and minimum income for the unemployed and low paid. This requires research which will carefully measure the cost of nutrition and diet, fuel, clothing and transport, recreation, social cohesion and inclusion, before housing costs, which need separate treatment. Policies for minimum incomes can be built which should never be reduced by any government policy, such as taxation.

In considering taxation and citizenship, measuring adequate minimum incomes should be the starting point for the Fabian Society commission.
The Rev PAUL NICOLSON
Zacchaeus 2000 Trust
Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire

Sir: Successive British governments have paid and continue to pay untold billions to force millions to sit idle watching daytime television, to encourage farmers to produce uneatable beef, to distort the housing market, to destroy irreplaceable scenic beauty with redundant roads, and to buy seemingly inexhaustible numbers of nuclear missiles (which, one fervently hopes, will never be used).

If Lord Plant, chair of the Fabian Society Commission on Taxation and Citizenship, (Comment, 1 September) or anyone else, wishes to persuade taxpayers that the Government needs more of our money (and I am agog at Lord Plant's apparent belief that government money is not taxpayers' money - or is it an official Fabian Society tenet that money grows on trees?) then first of all the Government should make sure that it properly uses the money it already gets.
ALASTAIR MEEKS
London SE13

The myth of Diana

Sir: One year after the passing of Diana, Princess of Wales, there are still people who insist on denying reality. The shrine put up by Mohamed al-Fayed at Harrods and his rantings about a curse (report, 1 September) is evidence of this.

As tragic as it was, it seems obvious that the Princess died in an accident caused chiefly by a drunk and out-of-control driver. The garish Harrods monument just perpetuates the cult that a minority of people are drawn to. Worse yet, it seems to push some people into believing they know what the future would have held - Diana and Dodi together in a perfect marriage. All this based on a barely month-old holiday romance.

You report that some people see the Royal Family as hiding from the public at Balmoral for the anniversary. It is the people who make such an accusation that are hiding from reality. They need to be reminded how many years the Royal Family have gone to Balmoral for holiday during August and September.

The people who say such things claim to have the best interests of Princes William and Harry in



In the third of our series on tourism in the capital, an open-topped bus tour passes Lambeth Palace

John Voss

mind, yet by their own statements they deny these young men any privacy.

This summer, I spent five weeks in the United Kingdom and found that everyone I asked, while shocked at the Princess's death, was more than ready to put it behind them and had tired of the continual media hype surrounding it. The views of the majority in Britain continue to go unheeded.
CHET CUTICK
Staten Island, New York, USA

More TV is worse

Sir: When will those with a hidden agenda stop trying to fool us that the media "more" means more choice and a better service for the consumer?

We first learnt that it doesn't in the 1970s, with the introduction of multi-screen cinemas. "Oh good," we thought, "six screens to choose from, so we outside London will get the Woody Allen films as well."

Try seeing *The Castle* or *The Spanish Prisoner* this week outside London - it's *Armageddon* or *Lost in Space* at two screens each for the third week running. The same applies to television. The more channels there are, the more alike the programming, because they all want to make shows that are cheap and massively popular (rather than moderately successful). There are entire nights now in which peak time is wall-to-wall soaps, docu-soaps or formula sitcoms starring ex-soap actors.

And Peter Bazalgette (Podium, 31 August) wants to pretend that it is all somehow very democratic that we "the people" are at long last having our say and should be freed from the "snooty regulation" of regulatory institutions. In support of this he argues that we do not sell enough of our programmes overseas, so they cannot be very good.

Sales are not an indicator of quality, but of cost. Good-quality television costs money to make,

unlike the talk show trash which exploits the vulnerability of ordinary people. If we must go down this road, let us at least be honest about it - what drives the programme makers is the need for profit, delivering fragmented audiences to hungry advertisers at minimum cost.
GILL JEFFORD
Thame, Oxfordshire

Sir: Whatever faults listeners and viewers of the BBC complain about, the Beeb will always completely refute them. Someone with an enormous handle will be wheeled out. Today (Right of Reply, 31 August) it is the Deputy Chief Executive of BBC News. My word, we are impressed. No more Heads of this and that but Chief Executives, Deputy Chief Executives (and Assistant Deputy Chief etc.).

But the steady increase in glitches continues - no tape, wrong

Sir: The North Korean military must be terribly upset. They have just spent vast amounts of time and money developing a ballistic missile system, only to find that a weather balloon can evade the combined air forces of Nato. It is lucky that the balloon is only carrying weather instruments and not a bomb. Or nerve gas. Or anthrax.
MARK SIMPSON
Birmingham

Sir: I heartily agree with the substance of Ken Livingstone's piece on racism ("Political correctness has not gone nearly far enough yet", 26 August), but to make political correctness into a shibboleth is absurd. The doctrine is characteristically defended by those who believe that human thought is so completely determined by interest-group that we can have no genuine

tape, wrong microphone, radio car not working, sports and weather by phone instead of land line or better. Broadcasting House full of suits but no broadcasters. Send out another title to assure us that this is what we really want.
JOHN RUSKIN
Complete Dictator of Cat Feeding and Litter Tray Scrapping
Wombwell, South Yorkshire

Peers' interests

Sir: On 10 August you published two articles alleging that "top peers" were "hiding paid interests"; I was mentioned among others. The allegation against me is that, even though I have included all my energy interests in the House of Lords Register, in a recent debate on energy policy I failed to declare these interests "in clear terms". Even if this were correct, it is a far cry from "hiding paid interests".

IN BRIEF

imaginative sympathy with those whose race, codes, or beliefs differ from our own. It is an attempt to solve by behaviourist means a problem which is clearly cognitive.
STEVE THORN
Bromley, Kent

Sir: Anne McElvoy asks "Are the Tories dying out?" (Comment, 24 August). We are reassured that they are "alive and well and sitting on the government benches" (Letters, 28 August). Is this why we have such an ineffectual opposition?
K R MITCHELL
Kettering, Northamptonshire

Sir: In your leading article on paedophiles (24 August) you find it extraordinary that

people cannot be detained if the prison authorities and police feel they are still a danger to the public. You seem here to be advocating what, in any other context, you would see as a police state. This cannot be the right solution.
BRIAN TAYLOR
Salisbury, Wilt

Sir: The present losses in the stock market will affect the value of private pension schemes for those retiring at this time. This adds credence to the demands of pensioners, led by the National Pensioners Convention, that a basic state pension, linked to earnings and sufficient for pensioners to live their remaining years with dignity and independence, is essential.
CLIFFORD FULLER
Gloucestershire Pensioners Forum, Gloucester

then grew very serious in the Russian fashion.

"Russia and America are two very different places, as Bill Clinton will find. For instance, in America, anyone can be President..."
"And in Russia?"
"In Russia nobody can be president."

"Why not?"
"Because Boris Yeltsin has got the job."

At this point, Yuri winked at me loudly.

"Does Boris Yeltsin know what he is doing? Most people in the West feel he is out of control, or perhaps sloshed on vodka."

"Well, if he is sloshed on vodka, he is at least on the same wavelength as most of his countrymen. But I believe he does know what he is doing. I think he

frequently) I should have to indicate everything I do in that sector, bearing in mind that I have listed my interests in the Register. I mention what is relevant to the subject under discussion.

Here was a debate on energy policy in which important issues were raised and which had a constructive response from the minister, Lord Clinton-Davies. And all you chose to do was to seek to demonstrate (unsuccessfully) that I had somehow failed to reveal my continuing interest in the energy sector. A sad commentary on press priorities!
DEREK EZRA
(Lord Ezra)
House of Lords
London SW1

Birds in the hedge

Sir: Some blame crows and magpies (Mike Donovan, letters, 29 August) and others will blame domestic cats, squirrels or birds of prey for the decline in bird populations. But without a place for birds to feed or breed these are distractions.

Careful observation of local Devon hedges and management of our own makes it clear to me that thoughtless hedge cutting is a major factor in bird decline.

Many hedges are cut far too early in July or August before finches have fledged or too late in March when thrushes are already sitting. They are cut too often to allow fruiting plants to provide food or for foliage to provide secluded nesting sites. This forces the use of exposed sites which are open to predation.

The constraints imposed by cropping patterns and the need to keep roadside hedges pared back still leave countless miles which, with sensitive management including cutting in mid or late winter and in alternate years, can provide abundant habitat and food.
MARTIN HUGHES-JONES
Sampford Peverell, Devon

Not aliens to Jesus

Sir: John Walsh thinks it ludicrous that organised religion should bother itself about whether or not concepts of sin and salvation might apply to any intelligent non-human species the universe may happen to contain. ("I say there, are you absolved?", 31 August).

The concern is not, as he appears to believe, new. Some of the best science fiction stories written this century, like James Blish's "A Case of Conscience", have explored just these questions. But in any case, Mr Walsh's desire to poke fun at clerical small-mindedness misses the point. To ask how other intelligent species might relate to Christ is not to look for potential new (if oddly shaped) bums on pews. It is to ask whether the values which give meaning to human existence, and which have been embodied for our culture in the story of Jesus - love, trust, truth-telling, compassion, forgiveness, self-sacrifice - have universal validity. If there are other minds and hearts out there, do they suffer as we suffer, hope as we hope, and if so, might we one day try to understand and befriend each other?

Christianity is built on the premise that, despite the bloodiness of experience and the miseries we endure, life is worth living, because our faltering loves and attempts at virtue are not self-deception, but a reflection of the fundamental structure of reality, what Dante called "the Love that moves the Sun and the other stars". That may of course be a mistake, but it is neither silly nor ignoble. I have no idea whether or not we are alone in the Universe; but if we are not, is it really so foolish to hope that such thoughts may have occurred to other minds, and that we might find more in common with living beings from other worlds than is suggested by the hateful clawed monster in the picture chosen to illustrate Mr Walsh's article.

EAMON DUFFY DD
Reader in Church History in the University of Cambridge
Magdalene College
Cambridge

Victims of sanctions

Sir: John Speller, Under-Secretary for Defence (letter, 29 August) is playing with words when he states that Security Council Resolutions exempt from sanctions against Iraq "supplies intended strictly for medical purposes" and "essential for civilian needs".

The British representative in the Security Council has constantly abused the words "strictly" and "essential" beyond their intended meaning and objected to the purchases of pencils, water filters, tractors, pesticides, sutures, anaesthetics, spare parts for cars and buses, sanitation equipment, and most recently oil installations equipment. We have had enough of political jargon from British officials trying to justify the harm being inflicted on the Iraqi people.
HUSSAIN RUSTAM
New Malden, Surrey

Coalfield turmoil

Sir: D S Hoskins offers an inaccurate account of the Rhondda troubles of 1910 (letter, 31 August).

There was a riot in Tonypandy on 8 November 1910 when one miner (Samuel Rays) died following clashes with the police. The Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, had ordered hundreds of Metropolitan policemen to South Wales, where miners were on strike over a wage claim. Following the riot soldiers were sent to the coalfield.

According to the *Times* correspondent there was in the Rhondda "the same oppressive atmosphere that one experienced in the streets of Odessa and Sebastopol during the unrest in Russia in the winter of 1904. It is extraordinary to find it here in the British Isles." The strike lasted until October 1911, when hunger forced a return to work. The parallel with Margaret Thatcher's 1984 assault on "the enemy within" is clear.

TONY HEATH
Brecon, Powys

Barman! Give us two more Yeltsin surprises, please!

BEING AS puzzled as the next person about the Russian economy - or indeed almost as puzzled as Bill Clinton about it - I decided to seek expert advice from my financial adviser so that I could pass it on to you. I could not go to a better person than my personal financial adviser. My financial adviser is called Yuri Fedorov. He is a Russian financial adviser. I do not mean that he advises me on Russian finance (all he has ever said to me on the subject is: "Never invest in Russia and sell all your rubles now if you have got any") but that he is a Russian who took up financial advising when he escaped to the West.

As a result, I have made a vast fortune by acting on his advice. Not just from share tipping, but from buying and selling second-hand

nuclear devices, good-as-new uranium, oranges, left-footed shoes, things like that. But this time it was merely academic advice I sought.

"Tell me, Yuri," I asked him when I tracked him down to the Old Chernobyl Wine Bar in the City where he likes to relax after a hard day's advising, "tell me the truth about the Russian economy. We in the West do not understand what is going on."

"You in the West understand very little about Russia," said Yuri. "Sometimes I am not sure myself. If someone had said to me 10 years ago that one day there would be a headline saying: 'Moscow Stock Exchange jitters: index New York Dow Jones index' - well, I would have said he was mad. Moscow Stock Exchange, indeed!"

And here Yuri roared with laughter and made a sign to the barman to serve us two more Yeltsin Surprises.

"Yes, who would have said that the ultimate triumph of Communism was to defeat capitalism from the inside? Who would have said that we would have joined you and then beaten you?"

"You have not defeated the West yet. After all, Russia itself is in very poor shape. It seems to be run entirely by the Mafia."

"My friend," said Yuri, swaying slightly. "There is no Mafia in Russia. You will find no Sicilians in Moscow. There are only home-grown Russian crooks. We have always had them."

"Did you have them under Communism, these unscrupulous, get-rich-quick merchants?"



MILES KINGTON
Who would have thought that communism would defeat capitalism from the inside?

"Sure we did," said Yuri. "They were called the Kremlin." He roared at his own joke again,

then grew very serious in the Russian fashion.

"Russia and America are two very different places, as Bill Clinton will find. For instance, in America, anyone can be President..."
"And in Russia?"
"In Russia nobody can be president."

"Why not?"
"Because Boris Yeltsin has got the job."

At this point, Yuri winked at me loudly.

"Does Boris Yeltsin know what he is doing? Most people in the West feel he is out of control, or perhaps sloshed on vodka."

"Well, if he is sloshed on vodka, he is at least on the same wavelength as most of his countrymen. But I believe he does know what he is doing. I think he

is trying Communism back to front."

"What does that mean?"
"In the great days of Communism everyone had a job and got paid, but there was nothing to spend one's money on."

"Nowadays, everyone has a job and there is plenty to spend one's money on. However, nobody gets paid any more."

"My theory about Boris Yeltsin's refusal to resign is that he too has not been paid his salary for months, maybe even years, and he is just waiting for his wages. If Bill Clinton wants him to go, all he has to do is make up his back pay. In dollars, naturally."

At this point Yuri's glance fell on the newspaper on the table, showing impoverished Russians lining up outside Russian banks in the

vain hope of retrieving their savings, and I will swear tears came to his eyes.

"You feel sorry for them?"
"I? Not at all, my friend. I merely feel nostalgic. These queues are queues like the queues we had in the old days. Ah, we had good queues under Communism!"
"Do you know, when Princess Diana died, I actually went to join the queues to sign the book of condolence, not because I cared about her death but because I wanted to do some proper queuing again. Barman! Two more Yeltsin Surprises, please!"

"Why are they called that?"
"Because nobody knows what goes in them and nobody can ever remember how many they have had."

More from my friend Yuri anon.

THE INDEPENDENT

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The clear lesson of this global turmoil: we need the euro

WHATEVER ELSE it might do, the current Russian crisis makes European monetary union all the more enticing. Whether it makes it easier is another question.

It is not a question that was answered yesterday by the Council of the new European Central Bank meeting in Brussels. Like their global counterparts meeting in Jackson Hole, Kansas last week, the central bankers of Europe have learned that, when there are crises, it is best to stay mum, lest anything they say be taken down in evidence and used by the traders against them.

To be fair, the bankers probably don't know very much more than the rest of us. On the one hand it could be argued that Russia's problems can only serve to make the necessary convergence of Continental economies that much more difficult. It hits Germany disproportionately more than other countries and threatens to still the German-led economic revival on which the euro was supposed to float. If the Germans were finding it difficult before this crisis to accept the degree of subsidy necessary to help other countries into the euro, think what they will say now.

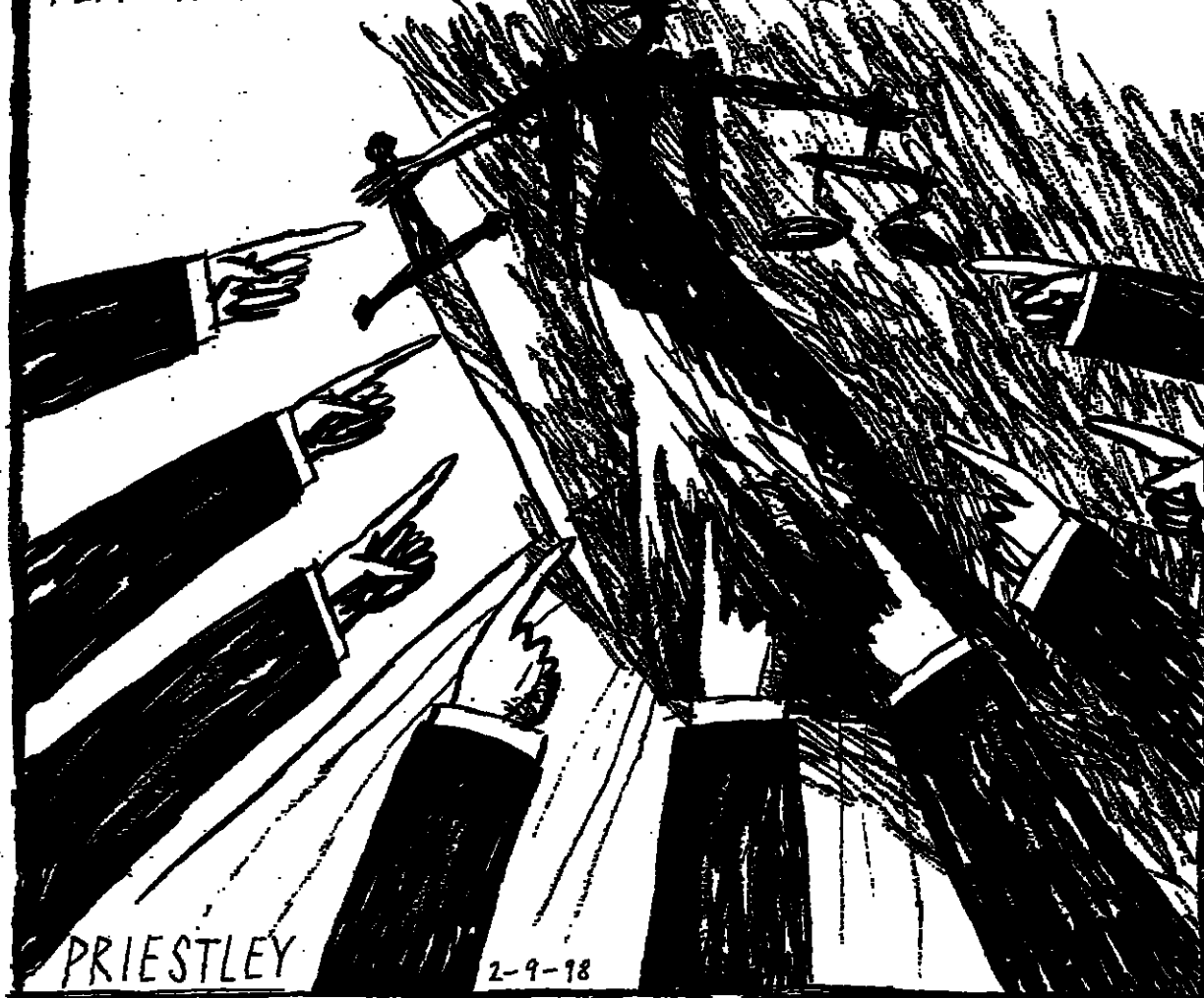
On the other hand, the stability of a common currency becomes all the more attractive, especially to the Germans, when there is greater instability to the east. In so far as this is, for the moment, primarily a crisis in the financial markets, then continental Europe, which has relatively less developed equity and bond markets than Asia, America or the UK, should be less affected. If Germany is indeed more restrained than the other EU members, it may make convergence actually easier.

The issue is less divergence of effect - a lessening factor in the global marketplace - than how to respond as a whole. If the world, and its major economies, are really threatened with recession now, or at least a slowdown in growth, the euro can undoubtedly help.

For a start, the very fact of the preparations for the new currency are creating their own momentum. It may be that the timing, at the very moment when banks and institutions have to cope with the millennium bug, is less than perfect. It may be that the general economic circumstances are unhelpful. But the political determination to see this leap into the dark undertaken on time and with as large a group as possible has induced considerable investment and activity in its own right that will serve well if the engines of growth slow elsewhere.

At the same time the concentration on convergence and common economic decision-making should help hold

A MOB OF ANGRY M.P.s CORNERS A SUSPECTED TERRORIST SYMPATHISER



Europe together under pressure, despite the temptation for each country to go its own way. The euro project has developed so far in an atmosphere of recovery. It will do its architects no harm if they have to remodel it to withstand reverses and markets that go down as well as up. There is a strong case now for a general global reduction in interest rates to counterbalance recession without reigniting inflation. A co-ordinated European response, helped along by the European Central Bank, could be a key factor.

As for Britain, its position remains a peculiar one - half in, but apart from the euro and its policy decisions. Like the rest of Europe, and like the US, the Bank of

England now needs to think of lower rates not higher. But unlike the rest of Europe we have an internationally-traded currency which is thrown about by financial upsets in the rest of the world with no regard for the domestic economy. The worst thing that could happen to us now would be for uncertainty over the euro and an American slowdown to result in a soaring pound.

Which is why cannot sit on the sidelines forever, or even for now. The one lesson of the latest turmoil is that the idea of independent economic policy-making is a thing of the past. Whether we like it or not, we are part of a global system in which the euro is now the most important new dimension.

Terror laws that could backfire

GERRY ADAMS' statement yesterday declaring an "end to violence" in Northern Ireland is good news indeed. It marks not just Sinn Féin's formal and explicit commitment to giving up the gun but it also clearly gets the whole peace process publicly back on track after the tragedy of Omagh. It is now possible - even more so perhaps with President Clinton's visit this weekend - to start talk of decommissioning, to urge David Trimble to respond in kind and, above all, to isolate the extreme elements of republicanism and unionism that wish to continue the battle with the bomb.

In which case even more one can ask why the anti-terrorist legislation being put before Parliament today. The Prime Minister would argue that it makes the process of isolation even more effective. But this hurried bill amounts to an attack on human rights that is likely to inflame the very situation it seeks to control. Ministers say they are attacking only the rights of terrorist suspects, such as they are. It has named four organisations at whom the legislation is to be targeted to avoid the charge of blanket civil rights abuse. And yet two of the organisations in question - the Real IRA and the Continuity IRA - have only come to prominence very recently. How do we know there will not be others equally deserving of the Home Secretary's attention very soon? Will he just keep adding to the list?

The Government is to give the courts power to seize the assets of terrorists as they already can for drug dealers. But the comparison is fatuous. Drug dealers' often opulent lifestyles are funded from the huge profits earned from illegally selling drugs, so there is a logic in stripping them of their possessions. Terrorists are not driven by money, but by fanaticism.

And what of the consequences of seizing someone's home? Even terrorists have families and it is wrong to punish the innocent for something their father, husband or wife has done - always assuming you get the right suspect. This legislation deserves to be effectively opposed. Let's hope backbenchers and the House of Lords seize the opportunity to enforce a saner view.

And finally...

BONG! SO News at Ten may be abolished... Bong! How dreadful. Nothing reassuring in the background while we make the tea between the first and second parts of the Bond movie. Bong! Never mind. There was never much news on it anyway. And finally... why don't we have a moment's pause to think about this sweetest picture of a rabbit from Tonbridge Wells on crutches?

It wasn't free enterprise that failed Russia, but the leaders of the West

THE AMERICAN media are already devoting pages to the debate "who lost Russia?" The truth is, no one at the highest levels of the US or UK governments really wanted to save it. In fact the strategy of the main Western institutions has been to systematically tear apart their old adversary in the East. With the collapse of the USSR, Bush and Major saw the chance to leave Russia permanently weakened. Ruthlessly, they took it.

When the Soviet Union collapsed the decisiveness of the right was not matched on the left. Indeed, many on the left regarded the appalling Boris Yeltsin as thoroughly good news. Anything had to be better than Stalinism. Socialism has spent the best part of a decade in a state of confusion, because so many mistook a very bad thing for a very good thing. That is why the crisis of wild unfettered Russian capitalism is not a crisis confined to the right. Whilst the left floundered, Yeltsin was taking IMF and World Bank advice to introduce the most hard-line fundamentalist version of free market capitalism. This was a grand asset-stripping exercise. Don't worry, we were told - this is just the inevitable early stage of capitalism, like America's robber barons, or British corruption under Walpole.

These assurances ring hollow today. From a world superpower, the former Soviet Union was being transformed into a Third World country. There always were alternatives. In 1993 I attended a conference of Russian trade unions, and I was introduced to the Speaker of the Russian Parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, effectively the second most powerful figure in the country's vast political system.

Khasbulatov's reforming credentials were impeccable. He had written the appeal read out by Boris Yeltsin from a tank when leading the opposition to the August coup of 1991. When I asked him about the composition of the Russian parliament, he told me, "There are more Keynesians than either monetarists or communists. We want something like the European Economic Community between Russia and other former republics of the USSR, with a central bank and central economic institutions but with the different republics maintaining their sovereignty." The more I spoke to Khasbulatov the more I realised that his economic policy was somewhat to the right of Bryan Gould's.

Khasbulatov's moderate Keynesian proposals did not fit with the policies of the IMF, and throughout the world he was caricatured as a hard-line communist. The final ignominy came when his moderate alternative to Yeltsin's wild capitalism was smashed by the shelling of parliament in 1993. In all my time in politics I can think of few more sickening displays of hypocrisy than the support given to this gross violation of parliamentary democracy by the leaders of the free world, Clinton and Major.

The West supported Yeltsin because he was their stooge who followed IMF and World Bank advice. At the time of my visit that year, the consequences of that for the Russian people was already becoming clear. Moscow had a murder rate twice that of New York. Machine gun killings in broad daylight were a common occurrence. There were estimated then to be 15,000 dollar millionaires in Moscow, whilst the majority of the pop-

ulation was living below the poverty line. The Russian parliament was cleared out of the way because defending even the most elementary social justice inevitably leads to conflict with the IMF-inspired policies of Yeltsin's government.

Russia need not have prostrated herself in this way. Compare the route taken by that other authoritarian centralised communist superpower, China. Like China, Russia could have retained state control of heavy industry while allowing light industry and a consumer sector to develop in private hands. By refusing to follow the economics of the Western financial institutions, China has become the most rapidly growing economy in the world, doubling its GDP quicker than any nation in history.

Instead the USA wanted Russian oil and gas cheap and encouraged Yeltsin to write off manufacturing in-

dustry. Inevitably, as Russian industry declined the country was weakened as a military force.

Two years ago I returned to Russia, and as with Khasbulatov in 1993, I was lucky enough to meet another key figure in the new Russia, the communist leader Gennady Zyuganov. He worked from a functional office, making notes with a cheap pen, sipping apple juice from a carton. This seemingly uncharismatic figure is now at the centre of the massive international whirlwind that is encircling Russia. It is in the hands of Zyuganov and his left-patriotic bloc to decide whether they will use their parliamentary majority to prevent the appointment of Yeltsin's anointed successor, Viktor Chernomyrdin, or whether they will bow to the growing international pressure and hand the free marketeers a life line.

Many have been surprised that the communists, so discredited by their stewardship of the Soviet Union, should have re-emerged as such a major force in Russian politics. But Zyuganov is an astute politician who has assembled a powerful coalition of communists and nationalists. He has positioned the Communist Party as the patriotic defender of Russia, winning over millions of ordinary people who initially considered supporting the extreme right wing politics of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

When I met him, he explained the importance of this new role for the communists: "The break up of the USSR was a disaster which crippled every former republic." It is easy to see what he meant - the Russia I saw defied belief. Corruption was not only endemic, but intrinsic to the new

system. Ninety per cent of all private economic activity was linked to organised crime, and \$20 billion a year was being exported to western banking havens. Yeltsin was running a campaign in which the boss of the former KGB, and the head of the NTV television channel were members of his election committee.

In 1996 I concluded that Zyuganov would have made a much more democratic leader than Yeltsin. I did so because he called for a reduction of arbitrary power concentrated in the presidency and the mayors of the big cities, and because of his contempt for the intellectual stagnation of the former soviet system. "The party claimed a monopoly on everything: property, ideas, truth," he said. "We could not return to that even if we wanted. Yeltsin has accumulated more power than the tsar and the general secretary put together."

For politicians in a newly impoverished "Third World" nation such as Russia, the issue of who defends the interests of the country is paramount. That is unsurprising in a country where male life expectancy has fallen to 58 years.

The dilemma the Russian Duma now faces is acute. If it endorses Yeltsin's nomination of Chernomyrdin, the deputies will be seen to have accepted a new government committed to the further humiliation of the country. If they reject Chernomyrdin, the President may well try to shut parliament down and rule by decree. This is a dilemma no parliament should have to face. I hope that if it exercises its right to put the people of Russia first, the West will not behave as badly in 1998 as it did in 1993.



KEN LIVINGSTONE
The West supported Yeltsin because he was their stooge who followed IMF and World Bank advice

ulation was living below the poverty line. The Russian parliament was cleared out of the way because defending even the most elementary social justice inevitably leads to conflict with the IMF-inspired policies of Yeltsin's government.

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
Asian reaction to North Korea's missile testing



WHATEVER NORTH Korea's justification for the test, we cannot condone it. Its principal result was to heighten tension in the entire Northeast Asian region. No doubt, ballistic missiles are a threat to Japan. But the highest priority for the Japanese government is calmly to examine the intentions of the North Koreans, and the performance of the missiles themselves. The nation must lower the level of threat through diplomatic efforts.

Asahi Shimbun, Japan

NORTH KOREA'S development of these weapons is a direct affront to efforts by countries around the world to secure peace and stability in the region. For this reason in particular, we find Pyongyang's action on Monday most regrettable. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and their delivery systems - such as ballistic missiles - has been on the rise since the end of the Cold War. For the international community, it has become

more important than ever that immediate action be taken to reverse this unsettling trend. What Japan must first do is co-operate in every way it can to advance the international

disarmament efforts, particularly those aimed at curtailing the number of weapons of mass destruction and ending their proliferation.

Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan

THE LATEST missile-testing at tests to the fact that the Communist North has continued to improve its missile systems, in defiance of international objections. The US, and the international community, must take concerted and substantial steps, since efforts at friendly persuasion and verbal warnings have been exhausted.

Korea Times, South Korea

THE THREAT is now clear. North Korea is developing missiles capable of hitting targets

throughout north-east Asia. This heavily underscores the necessity of renewing efforts to draw Pyongyang out of its isolation. Sanctions are not achieving that aim. Backing such a dangerous and unpredictable country into a corner through crippling sanctions is to court danger on a potentially catastrophic scale. However unpalatable it is to run the risk of appearing to grant concessions, some hard bargaining is necessary.

South China Morning Post

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The intention is to look Yeltsin in the eye and see if he is coherent."
Senior White House aide
on President Clinton's visit to Russia

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"He who does not enjoy solitude will not love freedom."
Arthur Schopenhauer,
German philosopher

"Have you read a good book lately?"

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PANDORA

CHRIS SMITH, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, rang Pandora yesterday in an angry mood. He was displeased by Monday's story saying that he had told the people of Salsaire that he was keen to see their town named as one of the British sites on the UN's World Heritage list. In fact, Smith said, he had merely said that Salsaire was "clearly a candidate" for the list, and had made it clear that the ultimate decision wasn't his. Pandora is happy to set the record straight. Smith was also displeased by our mention of the Select Committee report last June that was critical of him, pointing out that it never actually used the words "lightweight" or "ineffective". No, but the Committee did call on him to take "a much tougher attitude in his negotiations with the Treasury". When Smith told the Committee that his Department was "an increasingly important component of the overall work which Government does", the Committee responded, "We wish we found that statement convincing". Let there be any misunderstandings.

RUSSIAN RIGHT-WING zealot Vladimir Zhirinovskiy is not impressed by President Clinton's visit to Moscow. He has urged Clinton to leave Hillary and marry Monica Lewinsky. "A visit by President Clinton today is untimely, especially considering his recent moral scandal," said Zhirinovskiy. According to the *South China Morning Post*, he also said: "We, as individuals with high moral character, would prefer not to meet a person who still can't sort out his relationship with his secretary." The nationalist deputy is famous for his own high moral standards. Indeed, the Chinese newspaper recalls the stories of him beating up a female deputy on the floor of the Russian parliament and performing in a film along with several nude ladies. And he's always impeccably behaved with his secretary.

AS IF Western relations with the Muslim world were not tense enough, now Hollywood is upping the ante with a new Bruce Willis vehicle called *Siege*. The plot concerns a US government attempt to intern all citizens of Middle Eastern descent after a wave of terrorist bombings in New York. Arab and Muslim Americans are outraged at the stereotyping in the film, but its director, Edward Zwick, claims the film is an attack on the dangers of totalitarianism, and he's hanging tough. "Events in the last couple of weeks point out the fact that Arab terrorism exists in the world, and not to address it would be fatuous

and disingenuous." Better "fatuous" than "fatwa", Ed.

AMERICANS HAVE begun calling Bill Clinton "the man who launched a thousand jokes", and a favourite new parlour game is suggesting titles for the movie of *Citizen Stain*. The *Big Lewinsky*, *Willy Wonka and the Cigar Factory* and *Starr Wars*. Oh, yes, and watch out for *Terms of Impeachment*.

PANDORA SALUTES Emrys Williams, curator of the Lloyd George Museum in Llanystumdwy, North Wales. In view of the recent Ulster peace agreement, Mr Williams has decided to update the display board relating to Lloyd George's work on the 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty. "Lloyd George met with Sinn Féin and was the only prime minister to have done so until Tony Blair," Williams told Pandora. "It is incumbent on us that we now update the display."

THE SECOND series of the BBC's *Rock Family Trees* begins on Friday. One show will cover the late Seventies punk scene, particularly the reminiscences of Siouxsie Sioux, leader of the Banshees. "I had these three microphones gathered together, because I wanted to be not twice as loud but three times as loud as anyone else," she tells the camera. "Because I'd read about people's bowels dropping out at certain frequencies, I thought, 'If I can make it really painful, we might see some action here!'" Don't miss it.



How I rediscovered my teenage son



PAUL SPIKE

Living with my son seems somehow more essential than all the years I lived and worked for him

I LIVE with my 19 year old son. We're sharing the flat in Camden, north London, that I moved into last April when I separated from my wife. My son dropped out of university in June, having decided, for reasons still unclear to both of us, not to sit his exams.

My son's best friend, Harry, is living nearby in his father's West Hampstead flat. Harry just dropped out of his university in the Midlands. Fred, one of my best friends, spent last year living with his son after the 19-year-old botched his A-levels. Now he's at a good northern university. "He may be back," Fred says. "I'm not sure that he's ready to stick it yet."

Middle-class middle-aged fathers and their sons living together: is this the latest social trend? Don't ask me, especially not if you're a television documentary film researcher. All I know is what I'm doing, what I'm seeing and what I'm reading in the newspapers.

Earlier this month, I read that almost one in five British university students dropped out last year, the majority without taking their exams. This is an increase of 7 per cent -

from 12 per cent to 19 per cent - over the past three years.

Some claimed the explanation was the increased number of students attending university, with too many kids seeking higher education who should have gone straight into jobs.

On the other hand, the National Union of Students said the increase was caused by the students' worsening financial problems, even be-

fore the Government's £1,000 tuition fee takes effect.

All I know is that, after 20 years of living for my son, paying up to one third of my annual income to keep him and his sister in private schools, I'm now living with him. If you detect some confusion here, that's no surprise. I'm a man and according to all the recent reports on "Men", including one conducted "on four continents and 46 countries", men are confused and "failing hopelessly to come to terms with the late 20th century".

The fact is that living with my son has proved to be an unexpected favour. We have been having a reasonably good time sharing the cooking, doing the laundry, going out to the pub, watching television and failing hopelessly to come to terms with the late 20th century together.

Living with my son seems somehow more essential and satisfying than all the years I lived and worked for him. He claims to feel the same way. So does his friend Harry, who says, "All the years I was growing up, I only saw my father on the weekends or late in the evenings. I didn't know what he was really like. When

he spoke to me, it was in these big statements - as if he thought whatever he said had to be important. Now we just talk like two people."

Of course there are differences in taste and style. I have difficulty whenever I see the state of my son's room. (Best to shut the door on that here, as at home.) I've had to accustom myself to his personal wardrobe of motley T-shirts, baggy blue trousers and smelly grey trainers. The only thing he seems to watch on television are cartoons like *South Park* and *The Simpsons*. He isn't particularly interested in politics and never reads a newspaper.

However two years at university have taught my son to be a good cook, a canny shopper, and an expert guide to the local video shop, where he's apparently seen everything on the shelves at least twice. His concern for my health and welfare is almost wifely. If I'm out late, he'll ring around looking for me. If he's out all night, I can just go to sleep now.

The "generation gap" that was headline news during my Sixties adolescence seems to have been replaced - for his Nineties generation - by the continuing war between the

sexes. How this affects my son - or me - is not easy to pinpoint, but I suppose it does. We're not living a monastic life, but the women we each seem to be unique individuals. Indeed we sometimes give each other advice, but we never discuss women.

Charlotte Raven recently wrote that "women are increasingly rejecting men because they are simply not good enough. To say this is women's fault is rather like blaming a consumer returning shoddy products." Have my son and I been returned to life's supermarket. Are we two generations of damaged goods? Probably, since neither of us knows how to hold the door open for half the population of the world, nor how to make amends to it.

Still, in the morning, when we wake up and go to work - my son to the mailroom where he's tamping, me to the newspaper - I welcome the feeling of shared enterprise and shared blood. At least my son and I can share the same shelf in the world, making no big statements, just speaking like two people. For the time being, at least, we're sticking together.

The state must fight terrorism from a high moral standpoint



CONRAD RUSSELL

Imprisonment on the unsupported word of a police officer may be wrongly imposed

PEOPLE WHO are attacked want to retaliate. That is as true of those who restrain themselves as it is of those who take action. It is part of the human condition. Anyone who is attacked by terrorists is attacked by an unseen and unidentified enemy. That leaves our anger all dressed up with nowhere to go. Anger fed by that frustration tends to redouble.

I have felt this too. I remember the first day that we allowed our younger son to go out in London by himself. He was on the way into Regent's Park when the IRA blew up the park bandstand, and I spent the whole morning waiting to hear what had happened to him. I would not have trusted my political judgement that morning.

It has always been like this. In November 1965, when news that the king had survived the Gunpowder Plot reached Bishop Auckland, the inhabitants lit bonfires in celebration. One woman was out shopping when she heard that her children had lit a bonfire inside the house. She rushed home and put it out. Unfortunately, she was a Roman Catholic. Her neighbours, looking for an outlet for their anger, informed on her on the grounds that she had refused to have a bonfire to celebrate the king's deliverance. The court did not believe her story, and she died a year later in prison. Retaliation against an invisible enemy is still a risk to visible innocents.

Retaliation against an invisible enemy tends to be directed against groups. In this case, it was directed against "the Papists". Some 90 per cent or more of English Roman Catholics had no sympathy with the Gunpowder Plot, yet the official prayer of thanksgiving described Roman Catholics as "those whose faith is faction and whose religion is rebellion". Sixty years later, it was widely believed that "the Papists"

had started the Great Fire of London. The evil done by that attitude is still with us. The spirit of Drumcree was born on 5 November, 1605.

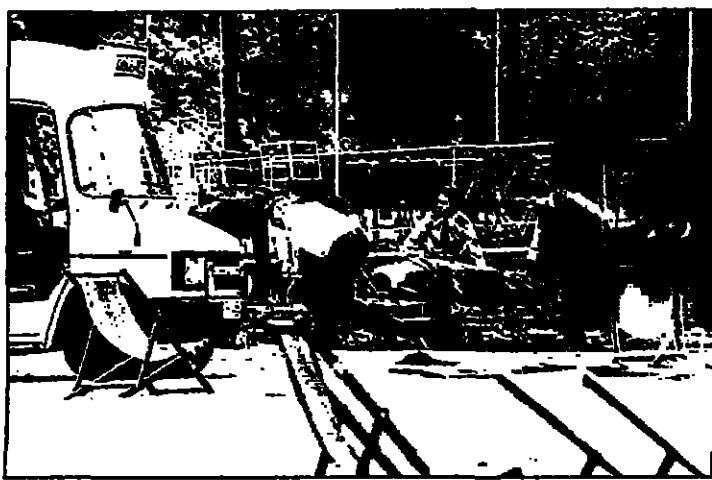
The group identified as the enemy is, of course, always far wider than the group actually to blame. This must be especially so when the identity of the terrorist group is known only in the most general terms. After the Birmingham bombing, there was a fire-bomb attack on an Irish pub in Ealing. Whether it is "Papists", "prods", "Communists" or "Islam", there is always a risk that this reaction may force the attacked group to identify with, and even seek defence from, the terrorist group with which it previously had no sympathy. It may give terrorists a base in a community that previously did not support them. It may of course go the other way. Among the Irish community, it went irreversibly the other way some time ago.

The urge to assert that "we are respectable people", if it is capable of being believed, can also be very strong indeed. Mercifully, it looks as

if the first reactions to the Omagh bombing have gone along the route of revulsion followed by the London Irish. This may be too strong a change to be reversed, but why gamble on it by introducing measures that must, at the very least, carry some risk of reversing it? Are we in danger of repeating the same mistake which was made in Bishop Auckland in 1605?

During my lifetime, there has been a major change in the military balance in favour of terrorism. The sophistication of portable bombs, car bombs, nerve gas bombs and other new weapons makes it far easier for terrorists to be unseen than it ever was for Guy Fawkes and his 36 barrels of gunpowder. Of 82 wars in progress in March 1996, 79 were not wars between states. The state is losing not only the power to control its currency but also its other main mark of sovereignty - the power of war and peace. Defence of monopoly had always stirred an extra dimension of anger, and that is now added to the reflex of anger at an unseen attacker. The state is defending its own power. So it should, but it must accept that, if it is fighting to win, it needs the Fabian skills of delay. "Don't shoot unless you can see the whites of their eyes" is a hard military rule when the enemy is unseen, but it is no less true.

Terrorists, if they are to remain unseen, desperately need a friendly civilian population into which they can vanish. The skill of defeating them is to isolate them from that civilian base. Until that can be done, the war against terrorism is a political contest more than a military one. It is a struggle not to alienate the floating voters. This means that the state's need to show that it stands for higher standards than the terrorists is not just a peacetime luxury: it is an indispensable condition



The aftermath of the Regent's Park bombing in 1982

of victory. Anyone who wants to win a war against terrorism, and not just to express his outrage, needs not just the patience of Fabius but the patience of Job. That does not come easily to angry people.

This is why the state risks defeat every time it abandons its claim to the high moral ground of legality. If the state, by its retaliation, creates as much outrage as the terrorists, it will lose. If it magnifies its opponents by martyrdom, instead of deflating them by its non-reaction, it is their biggest ally. Every parent knows how hard that sort of patience is, but it is no less necessary for that. Imprisonment on the unsupported word of a police officer may be wrongly imposed. It creates martyrs and turns the force of anger against the state instead of the terrorists. It weakens the state's claim to legality. Imprisonment on the word of a police officer risks violating article six of the European Convention of Human Rights. Anthony Lester, the Government advocate in one of the main cases, advises me that the state's power to claim a derogation

from the convention is limited, under Article 15, to a state of "emergency threatening the nation". It would have to satisfy the court, and not just itself, that such a state exists and that the proposed measures are "strictly necessary" to meet it. If it cannot do this, terrorists have won the same victory as an advocate who leads his opponent to lose his temper in court.

The risk to legality is clearer in the proposed power to round up overseas terrorist suspects. It is a very blunt instrument. Who is to be the judge of what is a terrorist organisation? It will be difficult for a British court to assess the internal politics of Burma or Nigeria and even more difficult for it to take the unsupported word of such regimes. If Saddam Hussein's opponents are to be handed over to him to be dealt with, are we conferring on him a divine right to rule until he dies in his bed? Can Parliament really think through these difficulties in two days in September when all amendments are being discouraged? Is that what we have a parliament for?

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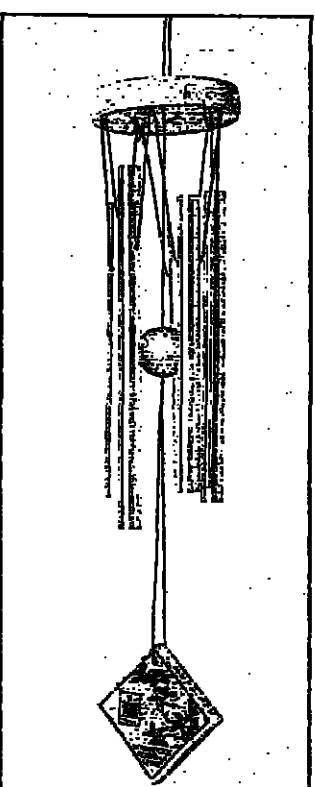
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PODIUM

MAHATHIR MOHAMAD

From a speech by the Prime Minister of Malaysia to a Conference on Corporate Governance

THESE ARE changing times for companies in east Asia. The impact of currency speculations which started as a ripple has created a "tsunami" effect in our economies, destroying in its wake decades of socio-economic achievements that were the result of the blood, sweat and tears of a nation's populace. Our cherished institutions are being severely tested while critics have paraded their usual generalisations and pronouncements. They say that we lack credibility. They insist that we have been lackadaisical in our enforcement of laws and regulations. They raised concerns about cronyism and say that our attempts to moderate the impact of bankruptcies are half-hearted. Above all these critics who themselves operate in absolute secrecy condemn us for our alleged lack of transparency. It is amazing that the same self-appointed critics were applauding our east Asian miracle not too long ago. Everything that we did then was right and should be emulated by everyone. They urged their clients to move their capital to our capitals. Prudence in lend-

ing to companies was thrown out of the window. We were persuaded to lower our barriers and admit their capital and practices into our countries with promises of rapid wealth creation. There were talks of a world without borders, a globalised world in which the wealth of the rich would flow to poor countries.

Then, overnight, we are told we are no longer attractive. Capital flight becomes the order of the day. When we try to protect our economic sovereignty we are severely punished by further impoverishment through devaluation of our currency and emasculation of our stock-markets. We admit that there are weaknesses and unacceptable practices in the management of our economies. But they are no worse than the weaknesses and malpractices of the developed countries when they were growing. Their rampant capitalism was so oppressive that the working class was revolted and gave rise to the socialist and Communist ideologies. As we all know, the conflicts that followed cost millions of lives, a hot and a cold war that sapped the wealth of the whole world.

Unlike many newly independent countries, Malaysia did not discard the market economy in favour of socialism and Communism. But we made the market an instrument for achieving justice and fairness to all in our multiracial society. The ways of Robin Hood were avoided. The rich were not robbed in order to give to the poor. Instead the rich,

through their capital and their entrepreneurial skills, were made to generate wealth for everyone. Upward mobility for the population was made possible by generous provision of educational facilities.

The government adopted privatisation as a strategy for economic growth. In Malaysia the necessity for an anti-monopolies law or anti-trust law as found in some Western countries does not arise. No monopoly has been given to any company, certainly not on a nationwide basis. Where there is a need to avoid duplication of costly infrastructure, the country is divided into regions and each region is given to one company on a competitive bid basis.

In Malaysia we have decided that the private sector has a big role to play in the development of the nation. They create wealth and jobs and they pay taxes. Since what they do is important for the nation, the government should in fact facilitate the smooth functioning of private enterprise. This requires continuous feedback and support by the government. And so the concept of Malaysia Incorporated was adopted, a concept

that regards the whole nation as one large corporation in which the government and the private sector together with the workers should contribute towards its success.

Through privatisation and the Malaysia Incorporated strategy the country was set to grow so that by 2020 we would become a developed country. Unfortunately we are now seeing the return of rampant capitalism. The old capitalists were confined to their own countries. Modern technology and the ease with which huge funds can be accumulated and managed has given the new capitalists tremendous powers. With billions and even trillions at their disposal, they can now challenge whole governments. The free flow that should bring wealth to the poor countries of the world has now brought about their impoverishment. Although government practices and lack of openness may be blamed, there can be no doubt that the loss of control over exchange rates and the cross-border flow of capital are responsible for the financial turmoil now assailing the countries of east Asia.

Life on Earth doesn't need us

HUMANS ARE not the centre of life. Nor is any other single species. Life has existed at the planetary level for at least 3,000 million years. To me, the human move to take responsibility for the living Earth is laughable - the rhetoric of the powerless. The planet takes care of us, not we of it. Our self-inflated moral imperative to guide a wayward Earth, or heal our sick planet, is evidence of our immense capacity for self-delusion. Rather, we need to protect ourselves from ourselves.

We are at the point of a very big crisis indeed in global biodiversity. Over 40 per cent of the land mass of the earth is now devoted to human agriculture. The cities are eating up the open spaces with their garbage and concrete. The forests are being taken over by agriculture. There is simply no way that this can be allowed to double in the next generation, which is the rate at which we are going.

Why should *Homo sapiens*, as the species is inaptly named, of all species, continue? There are anything up to 30 million species alive today. But 99.9 per cent plus of those that ever existed are extinct. It's not much use appealing, as many environmentalists do, for the saving of one particular species, one type of snail, when we're destroying their whole habitat. There is no scientific reason to think that we, even with space travel, are going to survive as a species for ever, certainly not by biting off the hand that feeds us, which is exactly what we are doing.

I came to this view through my collaboration with the independent scientist and inventor, James Lovelock. Our Gaia hypothesis, rejected by some as the fantasy of New Age crystal-swingers, demonstrates how biology is essential to the understanding of how Earth works. Gaia is not, as many claim, a theory of the Earth as a single living organism. Yet the Earth, in the biological sense, has a body sustained by a complex physiology. Life is a global phenomenon, and the Earth has thus been alive for most of its history.

James Lovelock had already thought up the idea of a living Earth in the mid-Sixties, years before I met him, when he consulted for NASA. His major contribution was the electron capture device, a detector used to measure concentrations of certain reactive gases in the air, such as chlorofluorocarbons, which led directly to chemists understanding how the ozone layer was being destroyed. Borrowing a term from physiology, Lovelock pointed out that our planetary environment is "homeostatic". Just as our bodies, like those of all mammals, maintain a relatively stable internal temperature despite changing conditions, the Earth system keeps its temperature and atmospheric composition stable.

In engineering terms, Lovelock wrote, atmospheric temperature is regulated around given set points by negative feedback. His claims that life sets environmental tem-



LYNN MARGULIS

We are like other species. We cannot put an end to Nature: we can only pose a threat to ourselves.

perature at an optimum were misunderstood, criticised or, more frequently, ignored. Lovelock increasingly thought of this planetary regulatory system as central to understanding life on Earth.

The term Gaia was suggested to Lovelock by William Golding, author of *Lord of the Flies*. In the early Seventies, they both lived in Bowerchalke, Wiltshire. Lovelock asked his neighbour if he could replace the cumbersome phrase "a cybernetic system with homeostatic tendencies as detected by chemical anomalies in the Earth's atmosphere" with a term meaning "Earth". "I need a four letter word," he said. Golding suggested "Gaia", the ancient Greek word for "Mother Earth". As such, Gaia provides an etymological root of many scientific terms, such as geology, geometry and Pangaea.

The sum of planetary life, Gaia, is an emergent property of interaction among organisms, the spherical planet on which they reside, and an energy source, the sun. Furthermore, Gaia is an ancient phenomenon. Trillions of jostling, feeding, mating, exuding beings comprise her planetary system. Gaia is a tough bitch and is not at all threatened by humans. Planetary life has survived for billions of years before humanity was even the dream of a lively ape with a yearning for a hairless mate.

Politicians need a better understanding of global ecology. We need to be freed from our species-specific arrogance. No evidence exists that we are "chosen", the unique species for which all the others were made. Nor are we the most important one because we are so numerous, powerful and dangerous. Our tenuous illusion of special dispensation belies our true status as upright, mammalian weeds.

In popular culture, the confused idea of Gaia strikes mythological chords. Gaia resonates with our longing for significance in our short Earth-bound lives. We have, for centuries, personified nature. It is unfortunate that Gaia theory has been used for this vaguely spiritual agenda by mystics, and some of the more scientifically-illiterate environmentalists. But the planet is not human, nor does it belong to humans.

Now, a new scientific organisa-



A haven of life for 3 billion years, the Earth won't be thrown off course by a single species, not even humankind

tion, Gaia: the Society for Research and Education in Earth System Science, is bringing the lessons of global biology to a wider audience. Few of us will ever be able to get the unique perspective provided by seeing the Earth from space, but the Gaia society will help us share the planetary perspective of those who have. The urgency for developing the larger, interconnected perspective facilitated by Gaia has never been more pressing.

Despite our very recent appearance on the planet, humanity combines arrogance with increasing material demands, even as we become more numerous. Our toughness is a delusion. Have we the intelligence and discipline to vigilantly guard against our tendency to grow without limit? The planet

will not permit our consumption of resources and production of wastes to continue to increase.

Runaway populations of bacteria, locusts, roaches, mice and even wild flowers always collapse. They choke on their own wastes as crowding and severe shortages ensue. Diseases follow, taking their cue from destructive behaviours and social disintegration. Even herbivores, if desperate, become vicious predators and cannibals. Cows will hunt rabbits or eat their calves, many mammals will vie for the meat of their runt litter mates. Population overgrowth leads to stress, and stress depresses population overgrowth - an example of a Gaian-regulated cycle.

We people eat just like our planet mates. We cannot put an end to na-

ture; we can only pose a threat to ourselves. Runaway climate change and further intensification of industrial agriculture would do just that. But the notion that we can destroy all life, including the bacteria thriving in the water tanks of nuclear power plants and deep-sea volcanic vents, is ludicrous. Many species, especially those in the four non-animal kingdoms - plants, fungi, protists and bacteria - do not need humans to take care of them. The assertion made by some politicians and propagandists that, by preserving biodiversity, we can somehow preserve the whole planet's life is just a further example of our big-headed delusion. However close humanity itself may be to causing its own extinction, or at best its irrevocable disintegration, most

other species will carry on regardless. It's just the delusion of our culture that we will conquer death. I hear our non-human brethren sniggering. "Got along without you before I met you, gonna get along without you now," they sing. Most of them, the microbes, the whales, the insects, the seed plants and the birds are still singing. The tropical forest trees are humming to themselves waiting for us to finish our arrogant logging so they can get back to their business of growth as usual. And they will continue their cacophonies and harmonies long after we are gone.

Lynn Margulis is co-president of Gaia, the Society for Research and Education in Earth System Science, at the University of East London

Police officers are not trained to resort to physical force without good and proper reason. But force is sometimes necessary, and CS is merely one option in that situation. It is helping to reduce injury and disorder, without lasting health effects.

RIGHT OF REPLY

JOHN GIFFARD



The Chief Constable of Staffordshire responds to our coverage of CS gas use by the police

CS SPRAY, which has been in use by police forces progressively over the last two-and-a-half years, is part of police self-defence equipment. It was introduced partly because of the rising numbers of assaults on police officers, and also because the likelihood of serious injury resulting from its use is far less than that resulting from the use of a baton.

That said, the preferred option for all police officers in resolving conflict is the use of peaceful persuasion by verbal skills. This is imbued in all officers from their day of joining, and is an integral part of all training. The vast majority of potential conflict is resolved by this means, and will continue to be so.

Only if that approach does not work are police justified in considering the use of lawful physical force. Any use of CS spray is subject, as with use of force by police, to scrutiny by the criminal law and the police complaints procedure. No empirical evidence, as opposed to individual and sometimes anonymous anecdote, has been produced in support of the proposition that there is a trend towards officers using CS unnecessarily and as a "soft option". There is no evidence whatsoever at this time of any death having resulted from the use of CS.

It was introduced only after careful examination by scientists for any potential for adverse impact on health. We keep the health position under continual review, but it is clear that the effects, which we openly acknowledge are most unpleasant, generally wear off very quickly.

Police officers are not trained to resort to physical force without good and proper reason. But force is sometimes necessary, and CS is merely one option in that situation. It is helping to reduce injury and disorder, without lasting health effects.

It happened one night

THE MEETING in 1945 between the Oxford scholar Isaiah Berlin and the great poet Anna Akhmatova is already the stuff of legend. Berlin described their 14 hours conversation in St Petersburg as "the most memorable encounter of my life", while Akhmatova called Berlin her "Guest from the Future". All through one night, they talked about the literature they loved, especially the poetry of Pushkin. At some point, Randolph Churchill, a friend of Berlin, made a drunkenly noisy appearance in the courtyard beneath her window. Anyone without direct experience of the Soviet era would wonder how such an occasion could have disastrous consequences. What was all the fuss about?

This sharply written and elegantly translated little book establishes beyond doubt that



WEDNESDAY BOOK

THE GUEST FROM THE FUTURE:
ANNA AKHMATOVA AND ISAIAH BERLIN
BY GYORGY DALOS, TRANSLATED BY ANTONY WOOD,
JOHN MURRAY, £17.99

there was nothing paranoid in Akhmatova's belief that this meeting led to a succession of new misfortunes. Dalos has access to hitherto secret files of both the KGB and the Politbureau. After Berlin's visit, he has discovered, Akhmatova's flat was bugged, and informers set to spy on her. Two of her books, ready for publication, were taken out of production. On 14 August 1946, Zhdanov condemned her in the Central Committee as both "nun and whore". All her privileges as a

member of the Writers Union were removed, including her ration book. Worst of all, her son Lev was taken back into prison. Akhmatova had been regarded with suspicion ever since her first husband Gumi-lyov's execution in 1922. Her poems had gone unpublished for two decades, and she had been tacitly written out of Soviet literary history. With obstinate courage, she remained friends with both Bulgakov and Shostakovich when they were in trouble, while Nadezhda, the wife of the poet Osip Mandelstam, once wrote that Akhmatova was the only person in the whole of Russia she felt she could trust. Still, Akhmatova's broadcasts to the beleaguered people of Leningrad during the war had restored her briefly to government favour.

Dalos's new material shows that the KGB did indeed imagine she had been suborned by Isaiah Berlin to spy for England. Moreover, he quotes KGB informers' reports in chilling detail. "She was ill for a long time with nervous exhaustion and cardiac arrhythmia... Outwardly, she remains cheerful... people completely unknown to her have sent flowers and fruit." There are even minutes of the Leningrad Union of Writers in which Stalin's voice is directly recorded complaining that

Akhmatova's good poems can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Yet why should Berlin have been regarded with such suspicion? He was at that time working for the Foreign Office. In Soviet eyes, however, he was a likely British spy. He was said, for one thing, to be a close friend of Churchill. And his relatives who had remained in Russia were already Stalin's victims. A distant cousin of Isaiah Berlin's had already been sentenced to 25 years in a labour camp. Another relative, a Dr Pevsner who worked in a clinic in Moscow, was later to confess (under torture) to British secret service links at the time of the invented "Jewish Doctors" plot.

Akhmatova was one of the most glittering figures of St Petersburg before the First World War, and a woman of remarkable beauty. She was in her late fifties, however, when she met Isaiah Berlin. She fell so much in love with him then that she found herself "going around as if the sun were in my body". Berlin, though he describes receiving a poem inscribed to him as "one of the most thrilling experiences of his life", did not reciprocate her feelings. When he returned to Russia briefly in 1956, he was mainly anxious that a second visit



Sir Isaiah Berlin

might bring more trouble on her. Boris Pasternak suggested that he should telephone from a public call box, and alerted Akhmatova meanwhile that Berlin was accompanied by his new wife. Akhmatova always retorted with irony to the disappointment of this "non-meeting".

It was not her only unhappiness. In the camps, her son Lev's mind had been poisoned against her by guards who persuaded him that she was indifferent to his fate. Yet the "bitter glory" she had long ago predicted finally came to Akhmatova. Dalos's book reveals the manoeuvring in the aftermath of Khrushchev's revelations, which allowed her to receive the Etna Taormina Prize, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Oxford. In 1966, a street in Odessa and a new planet were posthumously named for her. Russia knows how to honour its poets - once they are safely dead.

ELAINE FEINSTEIN

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WEDNESDAY POEM

FROM "THE NEW DIVAN"
BY EDWIN MORGAN

I dreaded stretcher-bearing,
my fingers would slip on the two sweat-soaked handles,
my muscles not used to the strain.
The easiest trip of all I don't forget,
in the desert, that dead officer
drained of blood, wasted away,
leg amputated at the thigh,
wrapped in a rough sheet, light as a child,
rolling from side to side of the canvas
with a faint terrible sound
as our feet stumbled through the sand.

Our poems this week come from 'Poetry of the Second World War: an international anthology', edited by Desmond Graham (Pimlico, £10)

The Right Rev Frank Cocks

ONE OF the criticisms levelled at bishops today is that they lack colour. Such a charge could never be laid at the door of Frank Cocks, Bishop of Shrewsbury from 1970 to 1980, a man who loved life and revelled in its variety and surprises.

Born on 5 November 1913 (the records that he "narrowly escaped being called Guy or, even worse, Basil, which had been the Christian name given to both my grandfather and great-grandfather"), he moved to Felzestown in 1921 when his father was appointed to the living of St John the Baptist.

It was an incumbency that was to last 41 years, and the large seven-bedroomed vicarage, lit by gas and mostly unheated, became home to the family of three with two living-in staff. Already the young Cocks was a voracious reader, well into the works of G.A. Henty, Percy Westerman and Conan Doyle, and here he made his first acquaintance with the theatre (through concert parties appearing at the Spa Pavilion), the Royal Air Force, cricket and tennis, all of which were to play such a significant part in his life.

He was educated at Haileybury (of which he later became a member of Council and Chairman of Trustees) and St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he read History. His theological college years were spent at Westcott House, Mervyn Stockwood and George Reindorp being among his fellow students. Here he distinguished himself not by application to his studies, but by becoming a rugby Blue.

On Trinity Sunday 1937 Frank Cocks was ordained in Winchester Cathedral to serve in the parish of Highfield, Southampton, the Vicar being Stretton Reeve, who later became Bishop of Lichfield. It was the example of a dedicated pastoral ministry as portrayed first by his father and then by Stretton Reeve which had a profound effect on Cocks's ministry, as did the Principal of Westcott B.K. Cunningham's frequent quoting of the words of the theologian Von Hugel: "Christianity taught me to care. Caring

is the great thing. Caring matters most."

It was early on in his service in the Royal Air Force that Cocks first hit the headlines: "Padre to Wed Dance Girl", screamed the *Daily Mirror*. The evening at the cabaret which ended in a proposal of marriage to one of the dancers left his parents and friends flabbergasted. But, despite the attempts by his father, Stretton Reeve and others to get him to change his mind, the wed-

It was early on in his service in the RAF that Cocks first hit the headlines: 'Padre to Wed Dance Girl', screamed 'The Daily Mirror'. They were happily married for almost 50 years

ding to Barbara Thompson took place in 1940, and for almost 50 years they were happily wed, bringing up their children, Michael and Tina, and coping with the extraordinary demands of a ministry that was to include postings to RAF Leuchars, to India Command at the time of the granting of Independence, to Dowdeswell Court where he served as Commandant of the Chaplains' School, to Bomber Command, at which time, to his delight, he became the Chairman of the RAF Cricket Association responsible for sides including Fred Trueman, Jim Parks, Fred Titmus and Tony Lewis, to Singapore and the Far East.

On 19 March 1959 his appointment

as Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force was gazetted, followed by his being made a Companion of the Order of the Bath. The six years as Chaplain-in-Chief engaged his organisational skills, in shaping the Chaplain's Department to meet the demands of a much-reduced and completely professional service and dealing with various aspects of the life of St Clement Danes, as well as his pastoral gifts, in visiting RAF units at home and abroad. They were necessarily high-profile years, with many demands for sermons on state occasions, demands which were to continue throughout his retirement.

Following his 26 years in the RAF Cocks's appointment to a living in the diocese of Lichfield again brought him into the headlines. As Rector from 1965 of St Peter's, Wolverhampton, a large town-centre civic church with links into all aspects of community life and a big commitment to education, his Member of Parliament was Enoch Powell, who regularly worshipped at St Peter's. In 1968 Powell made his famous "Rivers of Blood" speech and, as Chairman of the local Council of Churches, Cocks wrote a carefully worded letter to *The Times* distancing the churches from the views expressed. The result was a deluge of correspondence and constant demands to comment on any subsequent utterances made by Powell.

It was while Cocks was attending the weekly lunch of his Rotary Club in Wolverhampton that the announcement of his appointment to the bishopric of Shrewsbury was made. His consecration, together with that of Robert Runcie, took place at Westminster Abbey on St Matthias Day 1970, at a service largely remembered by those present for the fact that Harry Williams preached a sermon lasting three-quarters of an hour. In Shrewsbury the new bishop and his wife soon became known for their warmth and hospitality and quickly established themselves in the life of the Church and the Community, whether visiting Shropshire villages, discussing with churchwardens the future of



Cocks (right) at Westminster Abbey on St Matthias Day 1970 with Robert Runcie (left) and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey (centre). Cocks was consecrated Bishop of Shrewsbury and Runcie Bishop of St Albans

their parishes, or engaging in the planning of Telford new town, he brought to his episcopal task a wealth of experience and very considerable gifts.

The chairmanship of Shropshire Community Council, the presidency of the prestigious Shropshire Flower Show, the appointment as Archbishops' Adviser to the Headmasters' Conference, the membership of many diocesan councils and

committees all demanded a great deal, and all received a generous response. Moreover he was an invaluable member of the diocesan staff, as ever a good team player.

His retirement years were happy years with time for his beloved Barbara, his children and grandchildren, his golf (he became captain of his club in 1985) and sport, his home and his books, his after-dinner speaking and meals with friends, as

well as responding to calls for help from the local bishop and surrounding parishes.

Back in his father's retirement house, he and Barbara became part of St John's again for nine years before her death in 1989. Throughout his last illness he was able to read, to keep an eye on the Test match score, and to enjoy remembering. There was a lot to remember.

+ JOHN WAINE

Francis William Cocks, priest: born London 5 November 1913; ordained deacon 1937, priest 1937; CB 1959; Chaplain-in-Chief and Archdeacon, Royal Air Force 1959-65; Rector and Rural Dean of Wolverhampton 1965-70; Bishop Suffragan of Shrewsbury 1970-80; Honorary Chaplain to HM the Queen 1959-65; married 1940 Barbara Thompson (died 1989; one son, one daughter); died Felzestown, Suffolk 19 August 1998.

John Béchervaise

IN HIS prime he was big in stature, deep in voice and blessed with presence - you knew when "Béche" entered the room. He was outward-looking, engaging, a measured risk-taker, a good writer, artist, photographer and rich in that intangible and rare quality - leadership. John Béchervaise lived a memorable life in Australia's mountaineering and Antarctic community.

Born in 1910 and educated in Melbourne, Béchervaise joined the staff of Geelong College in 1935, charged with establishing a boys' outdoor programme. Following his marriage to Lorna Fearn Wanna, he travelled with her around Europe and, during the Second World War years, studied art at the Courtauld Institute in London.

On his return to Geelong College after the war, Béchervaise's interest in schoolboy exploring led him to establish a guild system modelled on that of the British Schools Exploring Society. His leadership of the Geelong College Exploration Society's ascent of the then unclimbed

Federation Peak in Tasmania's South West made him well known in mountaineering circles. *Walkabout* magazine - Australia's first geographical magazine, founded in 1949 - reported that in mid-January 1949 J. Béchervaise, F. and W. Elliot and A. Rogers of Geelong College reached the summit, where they built a cairn. The party returned to Hobart on 2 February. This was the last of many college expeditions organised by Béchervaise.

Bathing in the success of Federation Peak and earlier schools' expeditions, Béchervaise took a fast lane at the beginning of the Fifties to Australia's emerging National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE) managed by an expert committee including Sir Douglas Mawson and directed by Phillip Law. These were exciting and testing years, with Béchervaise and his Geelong recruits being solid support to Law.

Béchervaise established himself as a competent field leader at Heard Island (1953) and at the Mawson station on the Antarctic mainland (1955

and 1959). He was strong-willed and a meticulous planner on paper - almost to the point of distraction for others.

At Heard Island, he led an unsuccessful attempt to scale Big Ben, Heard's towering volcanic peak but, during the year, completed a significant survey programme, with Béchervaise beginning the first of a series of publications on Antarctic bird life.

From Mawson he co-ordinated and led several extended field trips of up to 600km inland using equipment primitive by today's standards, and covering an area of ice sheet that had been only poorly photographed from the air. He played a key role in exploring MacRobertson Land and the remote Prince Charles Mountains region. He worked hard and "did it tough" time and time again, working unsupported for long periods in extreme conditions. For this he was awarded the Polar Medal.

However, Béchervaise's communications, artistic and literary skills were his greatest contributions

to the Antarctic programme. He spoke and wrote of Australia's efforts there. Of his several books, *Antarctica - The Last Horizon* (1961) was valued by many young Australians and printed several times over, but *Blizzard and Fire* (1963) reveals more of Béchervaise the person. This account of his year at Mawson as Station Leader in 1959 is a rich literary appreciation of Antarctica and few works compare, at this time of Antarctica's colonisation or since.

His final book was *Arctic and Antarctic: the will and the way of John Riddoch Rymill* (1995), about the great polar explorer who in the 1930s traversed Greenland and led the British Graham Land Expedition in the Antarctic Peninsula. It was a protracted work which, because of advancing illness, took Béchervaise years to complete. Its eventual publication was testimony to his sticking power and determination to tell the story of another great Australian.

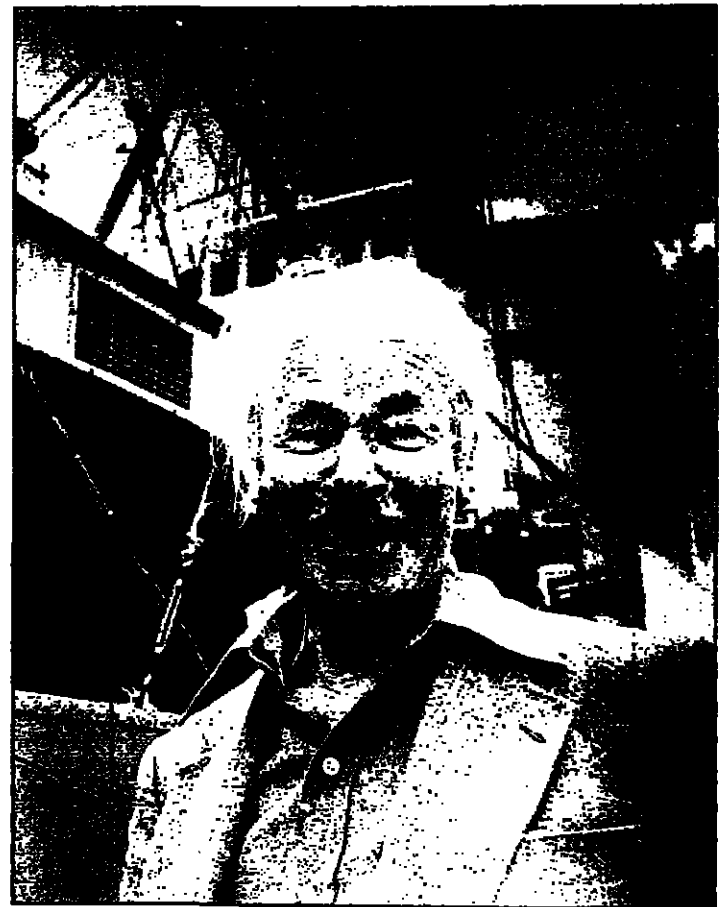
Up to the 1970s, Béchervaise played an active role in the ANARE

Club, which cared for the families of past and present expeditioners. This was additional to his long-time commitment to *Walkabout* magazine and to the Geelong College and community.

It was said that "Béche" never travelled - he explored. This best describes his retirement, as he explored America and Europe in his van. Art, photography and the classics, his lifelong interests, made exploration even more meaningful to him. Besides his Antarctic writings, the stout indestructible "A" frame Béche tent developed by him on the slopes of Big Ben in 1953, and still used by Australian expeditions to move freely in Antarctica and shelter from blizzards, is a wonderful symbol of this man's endurance and love of nature.

PETER KEAGE

John Mayston Béchervaise, polar explorer: born Melbourne, Australia 11 May 1910; married Lorna Fearn Wanna (one son, three daughters); died 13 July 1998.



John Littleton

IT IS an accepted fact that some ladies do not hesitate to conceal their exact date of birth, and as airline officials say, even "upgrade" the year in which they were born. But men suffering from this phobia are extremely rare, as I was to find when I started to give different dates for every reference work in which my name was solicited, to confound researchers and also to instill a little mischief into those solemn tones, with their impersonal cut-and-dried treatment of sensitive personalities. Though age has cured me of that eccentricity, I was delighted to find that a favourite singer, John Littleton, also refused to give his exact date of birth to officious inquirers. I have only recently discovered that he was born in 1930 in Louisiana, the son of a Baptist minister, who also worked his own farm.

When he was still a little boy, he began singing in churches, both solo and in gospel choir, and soon revealed himself to be the possessor of an exceptionally strong vocal talent. Asked for his exact date of birth, he would always refuse to give it.

For his army service he was sent to France, to the beautiful cathedral city of Reims. It was here that he encountered the woman who was to become his wife when, falling also in love with the whole of France, he decided to settle there permanently. So in his encounters with French officialdom, Littleton must have had to suffer the pain of revealing his birth date - in confidence, of course.

When he was demobilised, after already becoming, in army concerts and church ceremonies, the "ambassador of the negro spiritual in France", he took up studies at the Conservatoire National de Paris,

from which he emerged with a first prize for singing, and a first prize for operatic arias. Such success for an American was unprecedented.

He started to sing leading roles in opera, and enjoyed great success as

Littleton explored the vast repertory of black American liturgical music. Pope John Paul II praised the beauty and sincerity of his music

Boris Godunov and Romeo in Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, and as Faust in the Gounod opera of that name, with its entrancing ballet music interludes. He made several recordings of these operas and others. As well as

possessing a voice on the grand scale, he was also endowed with a striking stage presence, and unlike many opera stars he could act as well as sing. Modest, he abhorred publicity.

In 1960, Littleton began to explore

the vast repertory of black American liturgical music, something he had known only partly as a child and youth, but that his lyrical operatic training was to make him especially suited for. He was to become one

of the most beloved true gospel singers of his generation.

This kind of music was not part of the French national cultural scene as it always had been in Littleton's native Deep South. The French chanson however was a form that could be adapted to religious themes, most of which, performed by singers of a more trivial and sentimental set of standards, were heard around Christmas and Easter only.

The first true religious popular songs were composed in this century by Aimé Duval, which he performed for the groups of young Catholics whose almoner he was. He was both missionary and working-class priest, and with his guitar accompaniment he became known as "the guitarist of the Good Lord," his first record was cut by Gaumont in 1957, and one of its songs, "La Petite Tête", became very popular on the

radio. Father Duval in his cassock went touring the world with his inspirational songs. To reach a wide audience, he sang of the poor and the homeless and the lonely. His work encouraged a number of religious chansonniers, both priests and lay. Father Bernard, the Quebec Franciscan was one of them, as was his fellow countrywoman Jacqueline Lemay. Among the native French there were Noël Colomblat and Soeur Sourire ("Sister Smile"), whose "hit" number "Dominique" became a world-wide favourite.

John Littleton was perhaps the most outstanding among these people devoted to the renaissance of popular spiritual music. He travelled the world with his wide-ranging repertoire, and was one of the best-loved foreign artists in France. He was praised by Pope John Paul II for the beauty and sincerity of his religious

music. His many hundreds of recitals, after which he always kept away from the press and any form of publicity, were recorded on records that sold by the millions.

He cut altogether 75 records, and received many prizes and honours, including the Prix Mahalia Jackson and France's greatest recording distinction, Le Grand Prix du Disque Charles Cros. His spiritual message can be felt in all his work. Among his many distinctions was that of Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. With his passing, the special quality of his gospel singing, at such a distance from all the clamorous recordings of rock and rap and reggae, will be sadly missed.

JAMES KIRKPUP

John Littleton, singer: born Louisiana, Missouri 1930; married; died Reims, France 24 August 1998.



Clive Windsor-Richards

CLIVE WINDSOR-RICHARDS was one of the now rapidly dwindling band of drivers who raced at the Brooklands Track between the wars. He was an able and enthusiastic amateur and very typical of the Brooklands racing drivers of the 1930s.

He was born at Grange, near Middlesbrough, in 1903, the son of a steel manufacturer. In 1912, his father went to Russia to take over the New Russia Iron and Steel plant at what later became Stalingrad. He had a narrow escape from death when the Russian Revolution began. Windsor-Richards was educated at Uppingham and then read Engineering at Manchester University. Afterwards, he worked in Paris for three years with an engineering firm, the Société Râteau.

Fast motor-cycles and cars were already a passion in his life and in 1930 a friend, Bryan Gush, suggested that Windsor-Richards should drive his 30-98 Vauxhall in the Motor Cycle Club's one-hour high speed trial at Brooklands. This was an event intended for the amateur driver to gain racing experience on the track and the 30-98 was a fast sports tourer which many motorists felt was a better car than the contemporary Bentley. Unfortunately the car was already entered in Gush's name so Windsor-Richards impersonated him and subsequently received a trophy inscribed with Gush's name.

Between the wars, many drivers made a profitable business by taking British and International class records at Brooklands. Successful attempts

produced substantial bonuses from the firms who supplied the fuel and oil and made the tyres and other components used. In the spring of 1933, Gush realised that the record speeds set in Class J for cars up to 350cc capacity were very low, so, collaborating with Windsor-Richards, he built a car with an angle iron frame and crude body, using a JAP motor-cycle engine.

This car, nicknamed "Mickey Mouse", successfully attacked the British and International Class J records over distances up to 500 km, and

set in the 12-hour record and halving the speed. Some of the British class records set by Windsor-Richards and the members of the Gush team still stand.

Having begun his career with a 30-98 Vauxhall, Windsor-Richards began racing his own 30-98 in 1935. He gained several places at Brooklands and the following year won a race, finishing in front of the band leader Billy Cotton and Earl Howe. The car was tuned until it was able to lap Brooklands at 117mph, but old cars were not liked at Brooklands

In one race, the Hawthorn Riley received a most favourable handicap so the driver and owner expected to receive good prize money and make profitable bets. While the car was on the starting line, Windsor-Richards left it to attend to an urgent physical need, so Hawthorn turned off the fuel. When the race began the car stopped almost at once as the fuel had not been turned on again, so the financial benefits did not materialise.

In addition to Brooklands, Windsor-Richards raced at Southport, Donington and Crystal Palace and was placed at these courses, sometimes driving a Bentley. After the Second World War, he drove an SS 100 Jaguar at Grandson Lodge, the only race meeting to be held in England in 1947 and at Shelsley Walsh hill climb, but he did not like the way racing had changed so retired from the sport. Before the war he had run a haulage business at Bentley in Hampshire and he later owned a firm which specialised in metal electroplating.

His interests in vintage Vauxhalls and similar old sports cars, led Clive Windsor-Richards to become one of the founder members of the Vintage Sports Car Club and he was Club Captain from 1938 to 1947. He was also a member of the British Racing Drivers Club and at the time of his death was the club's oldest surviving member.

DAVID VENABLES

Clive Windsor-Richards, racing driver: born Grange, Middlesbrough, Yorkshire 4 February 1903; three times married; died 10 August 1998.

In his car, nicknamed 'Mickey Mouse', he successfully attacked the Class J records and the International 12-hour record

took the International 12-hour record. Gush and Windsor-Richards shared the driving with several others, including Gush's sister. Gush then built a twin machine, called "Vitesse", using a Blackburne engine, and this was only used to take the records held by "Mickey Mouse".

This breaking and re-breaking of the records by the two cars went on profitably throughout the summer of 1934. The Brooklands authorities did not permit cars to run on the track at night, so the 24-hour record was established by submitting the distance

and the Vauxhall had to be abandoned at the end of the 1936 season.

He then raced a 2-litre Grand Prix Bugatti and, in 1938, joined forces with Leslie Hawthorn, the father of Mike Hawthorn, the first British World Champion. Leslie Hawthorn had a very fast 1100cc Riley, which had formerly belonged to Freddie Dixon, the legendary tuner of Rileys. Most Brooklands races were handicaps and every driver's aim was to outwit the handicapper. In addition, bookies attended Brooklands and those in the know could sometimes make a useful "killing".

HISTORICAL NOTES

JOHN POLLOCK

Kitchener: monster or misunderstood?

ONE HUNDRED years ago today the great battle of Omdurman avenged General Gordon, destroyed a tyrannical regime and gave the Sudan 60 years of peace and prosperity – the only long period of peace it has ever known. A comparatively small force of British, Egyptians and Sudanese "friendlies" had been brought up the Nile by Maj-Gen Sir Herbert Kitchener. Near the ruins of Khartoum, a huge mass of Sudanese Dervishes flung themselves at the Anglo-Egyptians and would have overwhelmed them had not Kitchener brought Maxim machine-guns which wrought terrible slaughter. The battle is remembered most for the Charge of the 21st Lancers.

Kitchener, now Lord Kitchener of Khartoum ("K of K"), then personally laid down the principles by which the Sudan was governed for the benefit of the people. He became the hero of the British nation and even more so in 1902 when he returned as victor of the South African War. His immense prestige gave him the power in 1914 to issue the famous call "Your Country Needs You" and to raise a New Army of a million men. Kitchener's army was the key factor in our winning the First World War, a victory he did not live to see: he and his staff had been drowned when HMS Hampshire struck a mine in 1916.

In the past half-century this great man's reputation has been traduced. A false picture became accepted but now must be scrapped. The royal archives and many other fresh sources have disclosed unknown details of his extraordinary story and revealed his true character.

He was not brutal, nor had a defeated Dervish general lashed as he marched: that myth is demolished by a sketch in a letter written that very day. He looked rather cruel but only because of a war wound which also exaggerated a slight squint: he had poor eyesight which he tried hard to disguise.

Painfully shy and reserved, and loathing personal publicity, he was often misunderstood. He could be brusque and ungracious and ruthless with inefficiency or laziness. But underneath lay a warm heart, moved by a deep Christian faith which made him specially concerned for the poor.

He was very careful of his men's lives.



Kitchener: loathed personal publicity

He had an amazing gift for seeing ahead, incredible patience and thoroughness and a prodigious memory for facts and figures. On campaign he was rather too much inclined to do everything himself. He had plenty of humour when among friends and was so adored by his personal staff that some later commentators suspected wrongly that he was a covert homosexual.

Kitchener's record is marred by the high death toll among Boer women and children in the camps which were made necessary by the scorched-earth policy forced upon him. As commander-in-chief he must bear blame, just as Mountbatten bears blame for the far higher death toll at the partition of India, but the insatiable habits of the Boer women formed the primary cause of the epidemic. Rather than labelling Kitchener a monster the modern Afrikaner should honour him for the generous peace which ended the war, a peace of reconciliation and rebuilding which Kitchener forced through in the teeth of a British Cabinet which wanted unconditional surrender and a vindictive peace.

Years later, after he had saved Britain from defeat in the First World War and become the architect of victory, his great ambition was to be also the architect of peace, a peace of reconciliation. Instead, the vindictive Treaty of Versailles provoked the Second World War. Had Kitchener lived, the war of 1914-18 might indeed have been "the war to end all wars".

John Pollock is the author of *Kitchener: the road to Omdurman* (Constable, £20)

A time for mourning, not commemoration

IN THE midst of the current commemorations of the outbreak of the Second World War, I feel uneasy. Commemoration should be a cause of pride. Yet the outbreak of war in 1939 was in many ways shameful, marking as it did the failure of British and Western diplomacy over several years to do what might have been done to deter Hitler by all means possible. At the same time, the very act of war was a shameful one – not a struggle between equals with a declaration of war, but a sudden German attack and the immediate use of the tactics of aerial bombardment and land terror against civilians, to cow the Polish population into submission.

The Second World War ought never to have broken out. For six years the weakness of successive British governments had helped to convince Hitler that he could advance eastwards with impunity. With the political will to do so, this British weakness could easily have been avoided. From the very first months of Hitler coming to power, however, it was self-willed and self-inflicted. First Baldwin and then Chamberlain believed that Stalin, not Hitler, was the real main enemy.

"If there is any fighting in Europe to be done," Baldwin told a deputation of senior MPs in 1936, "I should like to see the Bolsheviks and the Nazis doing it." That same year, when Hitler remilitarised the Rhineland, it was Baldwin's Cabinet that put pressure on France not to act. An American attempt early in 1938 to become involved in the defence of the democracies was brushed aside by Chamberlain – with contempt. When first

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50 years after the outbreak of the Second World War, Martin Gilbert argues that Britain was shamefully unprepared for the conflict

Austria and then the Sudetenland were absorbed by Hitler; both moves were rationalised by the British government as a mere incorporation of German-speaking peoples into the Reich.

Those who said that these were the first steps in an aggressive design were belittled as scaremongers. Those who believed that German aggression could be prevented by an alliance of all threatened states were derided as warmongers. After Munich, Chamberlain saw a long-term peaceful settlement as the outcome of his efforts. For this reason he turned down repeated calls to set up a ministry of supply, or to introduce national service. Even an air ministry proposal to raise British aircraft production to the German level was rejected by Downing Street.

In February 1939 Chamberlain was confiding hopes that, "given three or four more years" of improving relations in Europe and an "advance towards disarmament", he could retire "with a quiet mind". When, a month after Chamberlain had expressed these hopes, Hitler

occupied Prague, the alarm bells that had already been ringing for some time for many millions of Britons now rang, belatedly, in Downing Street. Even then, however, Chamberlain hesitated to throw the war machinery into top gear.

That autumn, last-minute feelers were sent to Berlin to find out if some territorial compromise might satisfy Hitler. Thirty-six hours after the German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, there was widespread indignation in the House of Commons when Chamberlain still spoke of the possibility of a German troop withdrawal. Later that evening, even Chamberlain's Cabinet colleagues raised the flag of revolt, refusing to leave No 10 until he refused them to sign an ultimatum would be sent to Berlin.

Lack of adequate preparation and a tardy response are hardly cause for commemoration. In due course, with Hitler the victor in Poland, Denmark and Norway, and with his armies sweeping through Holland, Belgium and France, the British people – still poorly armed as a result of pre-war neglect – found extraordinary reserves of courage and a new leadership. These, the achievements and struggles of the summer of 1940, are the true themes of national commemoration.

The very nature of the war – from its first days – belies commemoration. Of the 46 million people who perished, the majority were civilians. It might be more appropriate to mourn the start of such a conflict than to commemorate it.

From *The Independent*, Saturday 2 September 1989

GAZETTE

BIRTHDAYS

Sir Leonard Appleyard, former ambassador to China, 60; Lady Avebury, mental health planner, 64; Professor David Blake, composer and professor of music, York University, 62; Baroness Bristock, former High Mistress, St Paul's Girls' School, 69; Dame Frances Campbell-Freeston, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen Mother, 80; Professor Dame Barbara Clayton, pathologist, 76; Mr Jimmy Connors, tennis player, 46; Mr Russ Conway, pianist and entertainer, 73; Professor David Daiches, former Professor of English, Sussex University, 86; Mr Andrew Dismore MP, 44; Sir Oliver Forster, former diplomat, 73; Mr Derek Fowlds, actor, 61; Sir Edward Goschen Bt, former deputy chairman, Stock Exchange, 85; Sir Marmack Goulding, Warden, St Antony's College, Oxford, 62; Mr Michael Hastings, playwright, 60; Mr Leslie Hill, chairman ITV Association, 62; Air Marshal Sir Paul Holder, 87; Mr Alan Hurst MP, 53; Mr Francis Matthews, actor, 67; Sir Patrick Moberly, former ambassador to South Africa, 70; Miss Patsy Rodenburg, Head of Voice at the Royal National Theatre and at the Guildhall School of Speech and Drama, 45; Sir Patrick Sheehy, former chairman, BAT Industries, 68; Mr Victor Spinetti, actor and director, 65; Mr Ronnie Stevens, actor and director, 68; General Sir John Waters, former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 63; The

Right Rev David Young, Bishop of Ripon, 67.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: John Howard, prison reformer, 1728; Peter Nikolaus Petersen, flautist and composer, 1761; Karl Friedrich August Hering, violinist and composer, 1819; Henry George, economist, 1839; Giovanni Verga, novelist and playwright, 1840; Friedrich Wilhelm Ostwald, chemist, 1853; Frederick Soddy, chemist and physicist, 1877; Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, diplomat and writer, 1887; Joseph Roth, writer, 1894; Lord George-Brown, statesman, 1914.

Deaths: Taddeo Zuccaro (Zuccherro), painter, 1566; Karel van Mander, painter and poet, 1606; Giuseppe de Ribera ("Lo Spagnoletto"), painter, 1652; Lady Alice Lisle, widow of John Lisle, beheaded 1685; General Jean-Victor Marie Moreau, soldier, 1813; Thomas Telford, civil engineer, 1834; William Nicol, physicist, 1851; Sir William Rowan Hamilton, astronomer, 1865; Henri Rousseau, primitive painter, 1910; Henry Hertzberg Lawson, writer, 1922; Russ Colombo (Ruggiero Eugenio de Rudolph), singer and composer, 1934; Baron Pierre de Coubertin, advocate of the modern Olympic Games, 1937; Philip Tennyson Cole, portrait painter, 1938; Tancred Borenius, art historian, 1948; Sir William Alexander Craigie, lexicographer, 1957; John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, philologist and novelist, 1973.

On this day: Augustus Octavian defeated Antony at the Battle of Actium, 31 BC; the Great Fire of London began, 1666; the bombardment by the British of Copenhagen began, 1807; the Battle of Omdurman was won against the Mahdists by an army led by Lord Kitchener, 1898; men between the ages of 19 and 41 were conscripted in Britain under the National Service Bill, 1939; Japan surrendered to the Allies, aboard the USS Missouri, 1945; the first television station in China was opened in Peking, 1958.

Today is the Feast Day of St Agnolus, St Antoninus of Pamiars, St Brocard, St Castor of Apt, St William of Roskilde and the Martyrs of September 1792.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Colin Wiggin, "Canaletto (G): sunlight and shadows", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Andrew Spira, "Medieval Carving", 2pm. Tate Gallery: James Heard, "Drawing Comparisons: Hockney and Gainsborough", 1pm.

COACHMAKERS AND COACH HARNESS MAKERS' COMPANY

The Election Court Meeting of the Worshipful Company of Coachmakers and Coach Harness Makers was held

yesterday evening at Tallow Chandlers' Hall, London ECA. A dinner was held afterwards. The following were elected as officers for the ensuing year:

Master, Admiral Sir Derek Russell; Senior Warden, Mr Philip Ashfield; Junior Warden, The Hon Sir Constantine; Junior Warden, Mr David Almond.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr Alan Waters, to be British High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands. Mrs Jeremy Daniel Banks, Mrs Jane Lillian Beattie, Mr Lawrence Cohen, Mr Nicholas John Gregory, and Mrs Erica Frances Margaret Stary, to be district judges, on the South Eastern Circuit. Mr Denis Edward Lascelles, to be a district judge, on the North Eastern Circuit.

CHURCH APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been announced by the Church of England:

The Rev Neville Bateman, Vicar, Valesley, and Rural Dean of Odcham (Winchester); to be also Priest-in-Charge, Eversley (same diocese). The Rev John Leeson, Team Vicar, Dewsbury (Wakefield); to be Priest-in-Charge, Birchcliffe St Philip (same diocese). The Rev Tom Maidment, Vicar, Hooton St Leonard with All Saints (London); to be Vicar, Bolton in Sands Holy Trinity (Gloucester). The Rev Kella Hydon, NDM, Upperby St John the Baptist (Cardinal); to be Assistant Curate, same benefice. The Rev Stuart Kinley, Rector, Kingston Smei (Chichester); to be Vicar, Kilmad (same diocese). The Rev John Leeson, Team Vicar, Dewsbury (Wakefield); to be Priest-in-Charge, Birchcliffe St Philip (same diocese). The Rev Tom Maidment, Vicar, Hooton St Leonard with All Saints (London); to be Vicar, Bolton in Sands Holy Trinity (Gloucester).

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

FERGUSON: On 1 September, to Maggie (Pamela) and Jamie, a daughter, Flora Magdalen Alison.

DEATHS

WOODHAM-SMITH: Charles James, 18 August 1998, son of C.I. and Cecil Woodham-Smith, he leaves his beloved wife, Jenny, and his children Elizabeth, Julia, Thomas and Edward. Funeral at Putney Vale Crematorium, 10 September at 11.30am.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of York, Admiral of the Sea Cadets, presents the prizes at the Sea Cadet Association Sailing Regatta, Port Solent, Portsmouth Harbour, Hampshire. The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, Parkinson's Disease Society, opens the society's new offices at 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am.

Living with the enemy

The US raids have focused attention on Islam, and British Muslims are feeling beleaguered. By Steve Crawshaw

Forget the far-fung dramas of the past fortnight – including the smoking ruins of the pharmaceuticals factory in Sudan, and the local fury when cruise missiles hit Afghanistan (on purpose) and Pakistan (by mistake). For Britain at least, the most significant potential effect of the strange American punitive raids could perhaps be seen in recent days in an unexceptional little mosque-cum-community centre – a kind of Islamic church hall – in north London.

Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed, one of the fiercest supporters in Britain of Osama bin Laden – the alleged terrorist mastermind who is now congratulating himself on his new found international fame – was in full flow at the Turnpike Lane mosque. He is a would-be Ian Paisley for the British Muslim world – full of fire and brimstone and eloquent invective. His anger never lets up. He wags his finger and shakes his bushy beard. He modulates his voice from a roar to a whisper and back to a roar. Always the message is the same: "The war that has been declared by America has been declared on all Muslims."

He is scornful of "chocolate Muslims" – brown on the outside, white on the inside, always ready to melt – saying that their compromises have got them nowhere. "Those moderate, chocolate Muslims voted for Tony Blair. And what did he do? He slapped them in the face."

His mostly young audience sit rapt, interrupting the two-hour discourse only occasionally with enthusiastic chants for radical action – including violence. Bakri tells them: "Continue the struggle, support the mujahedin, support the Islamic movement." Occasionally the sheikh is interrupted by a trilling noise, indicating that somebody has forgotten the stern injunction on the walls: "Have you switched your phone off? If not, do it now." From behind a set of hospital screens comes the noise of children playing with their mothers, separated from the male members of the audience.

Bakri's readiness with an inflammatory quote has got him into trouble. Donald Anderson, Labour chair of the Commons foreign affairs select committee, called for the Government to examine the possibility of expelling him from the UK, because of his active endorsement of attacks on US "government targets". In Mr Anderson's words, "Most people in the UK will be asking themselves why we are harbouring people who are inciting terrorism." James Clappison, the Conservative home affairs spokesman, weighed in with warnings of a "threat to national security".

It would no doubt be easy for the authorities to find grounds for expelling the Syrian-born Sheikh Bakri – as he himself seems cheerfully ready to acknowledge. "Don't worry about being deported – Allah will provide," he tells his listeners. Mr Bakri, leader of "al-Mujahidun" – the Emigrants – was granted refugee status in 1990. But he is not the Government's favourite guest: he is under constant surveillance. As he himself notes: "It's a hostile relationship. The Government comes to interrogate us all the time."

The package of anti-terror legislation that Tony Blair announced last week would for the first time make it an offence to conspire to commit terrorist offences outside the UK.



To many British Muslims, anxious only to practise their religion in peace, confrontational colleagues are seen as a gift to Muslim-haters

Kalpesh Lathigra

The proposals have been in the pipeline for a year – and a government consultative paper was due to be published in January. It was delayed because of the difficulty of framing the legislation. One problem has been that foreign governments are often quick to accuse their radical critics of being "terrorists" without providing acceptable proof.

According to critics of the existing rules, Britain has become a haven for extremists because of an alleged excess of British laissez-faire. Omar Bakri and his al-Mujahidun represent just one of a clutch of groups that delight in clashing with what they perceive as the imposed, un-Islamic values of the host state. The buzz-phrase is "the sovereignty of God" – in other words, no loyalty to a secular state. Certainly, Mr Bakri shows no enthusiasm for loyalty to the Crown. He applied for a British passport when he first arrived in the UK, and says that he would still be happy to have one, though that is now hardly on the cards. He would, he says, find the passport useful "as a travel card".

If he is expelled, he says, he would be glad to go to Afghanistan, home of the Taliban and of his hero, Osama bin Laden. "It would be an honour." So far, so good. That might make everybody happy.

The removal of Mr Bakri would, however, scarcely tackle the problem

of alienation. He seems ready to encourage his audience to go further than he can, because of the terms of the agreement he signed when he was granted refugee status. "Those of us who are refugees cannot include in struggle. But those who are British..." The sentence is left dangling in the air. Mr Bakri's accent betrays his Middle Eastern birth. Most of his audience, by contrast, are Lon-

doners born and bred: no legislation in the world could get rid of them to a foreign country. Bakri himself argues: "Don't they realise that if Osama bin Laden is killed and Omar Bakri is deported, the struggle will continue?" In this at least, it seems difficult to challenge his logic. Omar Bakri is not alone. And as for Clinton's "pre-eminent organiser of international terrorism in the world today", Osama bin Laden (assassinated martyr) does not sound like a scenario that would enable American citizens or visitors to Planet Hollywood to sleep easier in their beds than Osama bin Laden (troubleshooting bigmouth).

'One kind of terrorism' is never curbed by another kind of terrorism. It only strengthens their case. It makes the world more dangerous'

Many Muslims point out that

for Bakri – as even his critics reluctantly admit. He himself says that he has received a flood of support in the wake of last month's raids. He has been giving a string of well-attended speeches – in Birmingham, Leicester, Sheffield and Derby in one day alone – and claims that attendance is much higher than usual.

Even at the super-tolerant end of the Islamic spectrum, nagging doubts and despair can be found, in response to the American raids and the British gun-ho support for them. Professor Akbar Ahmed, of Selwyn College, Cambridge, has played a key role in Britain working for Christian-Muslim tolerance and understanding. But he believes that

the US raids, and the British support for those raids, have made the prospects for an integrated society worse than ever before. "I feel rather saddened, rather chastened. The attack was irrational; it draws in the wrath of the Islamic world so that there is no difference between moderate and radical. It unchains a spiralling cycle of violence, a tremendous sense of fury."

Speaking last Tuesday afternoon, Ahmed said: "Some guy in Cairo, Karachi, Delhi, Birmingham or London will see an innocent target, and they will suffer. It's just spiralling out of control." Hours later, a bomb exploded in the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Johannesburg, killing one person and wounding 28. Ahmed was bitter that he had been proved right so swiftly. "Unfortunately, it doesn't surprise me at all. Anyone, anywhere, any time is vulnerable." He speaks with bitter irony of the impact of Clinton's actions. "Brilliantly, Clinton has given a focus, to radicalise Muslims. We can try to put a lid on this. But it's open season."

It is hard to find a Muslim who

does not feel battered by the events of last month. Bill Clinton began his speech with a few words of politesse about "hundreds of millions of good, peace-loving people" and about the "great religion" of Islam. But few seem to treat those words as anything more than a meaningless verbal twirl, to be capped by the "Oh and by the way, we've bombed you" punch line.

The East London Mosque on Whitechapel Road has a mixed congregation from different countries. Most are keen to distance themselves from the inflammatory rhetoric of Omar Bakri in the Turnpike Lane mosque. But they too, are dismayed by the American raids. As one man said: "There's no point getting angry. I just feel sad." Another argued: "Let's put it this way. If it were the other way round – if a Muslim country did that to America or England – what would you feel?" A third makes a point that is repeatedly heard, with reference to last month's bomb in Omagh. "The fear of Islam is well known. When it is a Muslim, the headline always says 'Muslim fanatic', or 'Muslim terrorist'. But when 28 people died, who did it? The headline should have said 'Christian fanatics kill innocent people'."

Interpreted generously, part of the reasoning behind the Sudan and Afghanistan raids seems to be that

tough action against one group will discourage the others. Bill Clinton's declaration that there would be "no sanctuary for terrorists" picked up directly on Ronald Reagan's famous declaration – "You can run, but you can't hide". In reality, as the bomb in Johannesburg made clear, the boot may be on the other foot. The perceived injustice is likely only to increase Muslim anger – and thus, from a small, "Real IRA"-style minority, the violence. In Northern Ireland, the prospects for further terrorism are poor – even the "Real IRA" seems to be on the retreat – because talking and compromise have topped the agenda in recent months. The contrast with the Middle East could hardly be more stark.

There are plenty in Bakri's congregation who share his radical views and his acceptance of violence. He is ready to "endorse attacks on US forces", saying: "We are at war with the forces that have occupied our land." But, with what in other contexts might be described as Jesuitical precision, he insists: "I don't say, 'Do it.' I say: 'It is allowed [by Islam]. It is a question of jurisprudence.'" And then, as a fiery postscript: "Do you want me to compromise?" The answer from his audience comes back: "No!" Bakri distances himself from civilian deaths – "collateral damage", as the military like to call it. "If I kill women or children, condemn me!"

But some of his congregation have no such qualms. One man, describing himself as a civil servant, declares: "We endorse the (embassy) bombings – and call for more. Military targets – anything to do with the government. If civilians die, and they're not targeted – that's what war is about."

Moderate Muslims argue that violence is itself abhorrent to Islam. Professor Ahmed notes that the two most important appellations of Allah are Rahman and Rahim – Compassionate and Merciful.

Tariq Aziz-Khan, a former Commissioner for Racial Equality and now chair of the British-Muslim Forum, insists: "Islam preaches peace. We as Muslims condemn terrorism carried out by states or individuals – Osama bin Laden, Abu Nidal, whoever." He is dismissive of "self-appointed leaders" like Bakri, who "manage to grab headlines just because they say such nasty things". But he cannot understand why the United States, backed by Britain, "got involved in terrorism of a second type". "Previously, the US was the first country to go to the [United Nations] Security Council. In this case, it never involved the Security Council or its members. Nobody was told. It's very sad, and sets a wrong precedent." Despite his insistence that somebody like Bakri is a fringe figure, he believes the knock-on effects of last week's raids are clear. "One kind of terrorism is never curbed by another kind of terrorism. It only strengthens their case. It makes the world a more dangerous place."

Professor Ahmed, an increasingly embattled voice of moderation, sees the prospects in equally bleak terms. "Compassion, justice, tolerance – the West does not see any of these factors. It sees things only as a matter of geopolitics. I feel almost that I am facing a tidal wave. On the one hand, you've got the missiles. On the other hand, you've got the extremists. It's difficult to do a King Canute. But you just have to try."

The true madness of war

Spielberg's recreation of the hell of battle doesn't come close. By Paul Lashmar

THE COMBAT scenes in Steven Spielberg's film *Saving Private Ryan* are so horrifically accurate that they have reportedly triggered nightmares and flashbacks in D-Day veterans. Amid the grim shambles of hand-to-hand fighting, arterial blood spurts rhythmically and dying men cry for their mothers.

We are only now beginning to understand how war affects soldiers. Spielberg's film covers the Normandy landings where much modern combat research began. Studies of US soldiers showed that 98 per cent of fighting men cracked after 35 days of active front-line fighting. Only 2 per cent of soldiers actually enjoyed battle and did not crack. Military doctors considered them aggressive psychopaths.

In the First World War, the diagnosis of "shell shock" proved that soldiers who suffered breakdowns were not malingers. Lord Moran, later Churchill's doctor, served as a medical officer. In his book *Anatomy of Courage*, he describes a Sergeant Turner who was unable to speak and trembled, although "trying to keep his limbs steady and his head up as the game was up and he was done. When this sort of thing happens to a good fellow it is final".

Moran knew Turner to be a man of exemplary courage.

A remarkable discovery by US researchers in the Second World War was that many "stable" men could not kill – soldiers who went into battle yet never fired their weapons. Lieutenant Robert G Cole was in charge of the 502nd Parachute Infantry, considered one of the best units in the US army. Yet when they were being attacked along the Carcanton Causeway on 10 June 1944, he found it impossible to make his men fire: "Not one man in 25 voluntarily fired. There was no cover, their only protection was to continue a fire which would make the enemy keep his head down. They all knew this but could not force themselves to act upon it."

A Korean War study of the US Air Force's famed 51st Fighter Wing, known as the MIG-killers, revealed that half their pilots had never fired their guns – and of the half that did, only 10 per cent had hit anything. Fear in fiction is usually a few beads of sweat. Fear in real battle is often debilitating. In a study of US combat soldiers in 1944, more than half admitted they became sick to their stomachs, felt faint and lost control of their bowels in battle.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports on a battle in 1003 between English and Danish armies. Aelfric, the English commander, became violently ill and began to vomit. He couldn't continue, and the Danes routed their adversaries.

Soldiers do run away, it's a fact of war, and a good commander knows that a frightened unit can undermine an army. In 480 BC, Leonidas was in command of a force of Spartans holding the pass of Thermopylae. He realised that some troops, shaken in earlier action, were likely to break. Herodotus wrote that Leonidas "dismissed them when he realised they had no heart for the fight" and that, when the battle was about to start, two soldiers claimed that they were suffering from an "acute inflammation of the eyes" and retreated to the rear. One returned to the front line, but the second, Aristodemus, "finding his heart failed him", stayed in safety. After the battle, he "found himself in such disgrace that he hanged himself".

Soldiers can develop combat reactions within seconds. At the battle of Eylau, in 1807, a Russian cannonball ripped apart a French officer, knocking off his hat. The

shock paralysed the officer in the middle of the fight. Eventually the battle moved elsewhere, and the officer's horse calmly walked away, taking its paralysed passenger to safety. He came out of shock later.

Battle exhaustion is the first level of psychological stress. During the Normandy campaign the British army had battle exhaustion units just behind the lines. For every 1,000 men with physical wounds, "combat stress" affected a further 200 – though 60-65 per cent of soldiers could be returned to their units after 10 days, according to Dr Desmond Murphy, a veteran and leading military psychiatrist.

An analysis of psychiatric casualties of D-Day that appeared in *The Lancet* of August 1944 did not exactly show an enlightened attitude. "Of 100 psychiatric casualties received from the beachhead during the first 10 days, six were severe chronic neurotics, five could be regarded as cases of pure physical exhaustion, two were schizophrenics and the rest men with a history of childhood neurosis who had adjusted superficially in maturity."

There is now a mounting body of evidence that suggests that most front-line veterans will suffer psy-



D-Day fighting was so intense that the British army set up special battle exhaustion units. MSI

chological scarring. We are only now beginning to understand the effects of battle. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has been defined only in the last 20 years.

Jack Daniel, a gunner in the Desert Rats (who fought Rommel in North Africa), estimated that "about 50 per cent of my mates hit the bottle upon returning. I had nightmares after the war. It wasn't done to consult a 'trick cyclist'. If you went to the doctor, it was about a related symptom, like not sleeping."

One research project on Dutch resistance veterans showed that

PTSD symptoms grew worse after retirement. Elite units are not immune. Studies of paratroop regiments that fought in the Falklands showed that, five years on, 22 per cent of men still serving had full-blown PTSD symptoms.

The technology of mass slaughter has raised the stakes. It was no coincidence that, with the advent of the machine gun and the sustained artillery barrage, shell shock was finally recognised. Richard Gabriel, in his book *No More Heroes*, says: "To understand the development of war is to recognise a single indis-

putable fact: not only is war becoming more lethal in terms of its ability to kill and maim, but it is far more destructive in its ability to drive soldiers mad."

What keeps soldiers returning to the front line is camaraderie. As Jack Daniel recalled: "I remember being sent away from the front on a task. I can't tell you the pleasure of sleeping in a bed... But I felt I had to get back as quickly as possible to rejoin my mates. It was this team spirit that kept you fighting when you wanted to run away – you just couldn't leave your mates."

Be wary of your e-mail admirer

Be wary of your e-mail admirer

Cyber stalking by e-mail is a growing problem as wierdos from around the world go online. By Kate Mikhail

Tales of office romance taking off via e-mail and love on the Internet are commonplace, but there is a downside to electronic communication. There is an insidious tendency already causing a backlash in America, which people in the UK are only just waking up to: known as spam (unwanted junk e-mail), flame-mail (e-mail bullying) and now cyber-stalking.

For Lucy, 25, it all started just after Valentine's Day when she received a phone call claiming to be from the "Electronic Valentine's Service" with the message: "I've only got eyes for you."

At first she assumed it was a friend having a joke but, a few phone calls later, "it was blindingly obvious my friends knew nothing about it". The messages, intriguingly, were from a total stranger.

"It was very flattering," she admits. "And I did play along at the beginning. I was very excited about it. I even thought 'God, it might be someone really nice'."

Before she knew it, Lucy's secret admirer had set up an anonymous e-mail address and tracked down her office e-mail address, and the messages started flying. The e-mails she received were laden with cryptic clues about who the man really was, and where he worked, and a flirty game of questions and answers soon took hold.

Mr X, as he sometimes called himself, maintained that he was acting on behalf of someone else, and used a number of red-herring aliases to throw Lucy off his scent.

When she asked why he had decided to contact her, he said: "I was in a Valentine's Day mood, I was feeling frivolous. From what I'd seen, you appeared to be a bouncy, bubbly, smiley person, the type I'd like to know... contact was a challenge." He asked her what she wore "when alone in bed", and promptly sent her a baggy T-shirt.

He knew where she worked and where she went for lunch, but when the information he had on her became too personal she began to get worried. "He had found out my mother's name, and had watched me walk the dogs on the beach on my own. He knew the dogs' names, and had worked out where I lived. He had even been to the gym where I'm a member, as he said, 'I saw you last

night, and I like the blue swimming-costume'. It was getting creepy."

Some days Lucy would receive up to five or six e-mails, and if she didn't reply he would e-mail her: "Are you there? Anybody there?", and then "5", "4", "3", and so on, in an effort to get her to answer him.

"At this point I didn't know who he was, what he looked like, or if, when I went for lunch, he was behind me or not."

Given the clues that he had given her, Lucy managed to track down Mr X, who, it turned out, worked in an office opposite her own office window. And once she knew who he was she felt "frantic about knowing what he looked like" and determined to confront him.

"I sent him an e-mail saying 'as soon as you get this why not call me?'" And, sitting with her back to the window, she set up a number of mirrors so that she could tell who he was when he picked up the phone.

Having identified him, she confronted him in the lobby of his building. The person she met was a "shifty-looking" 50-year-old man,

who wouldn't meet her eye, and still maintained he was the go-between acting on someone else's behalf. Lucy found the meeting very disturbing. In her lunch break she went to the police with all her evidence, and the next morning she received a bunch of flowers with the message: "It has been a good game, but now it's the end."

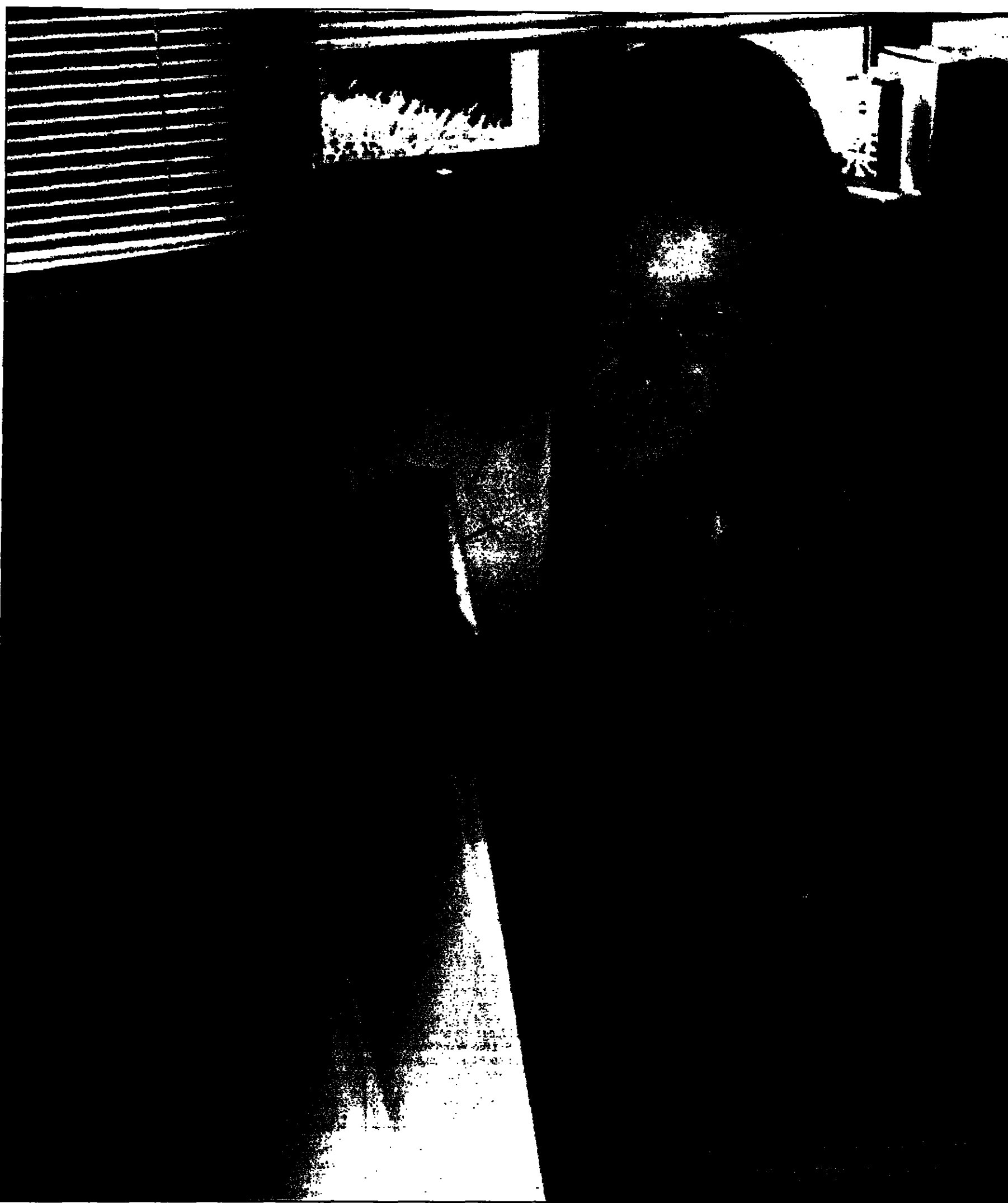
The e-mails have all but stopped, so Lucy has decided not to take further action, other than to keep her office blinds closed at all times.

Victim Support has had a lot of experience of stalkers cases. "It is all to do with mind games and creating fear and mental intimidation," says a spokesperson. "It is intended to make the other person feel weak. The e-mail is just another tool to do that, and it is anonymous."

"With e-mails you never know how far or how close your tormentor is; they could be in the same office or across the country and, as the victim, you're just left waiting to see what's going to happen, and when."

Thanks to the Protection from Harassment Act, which came into force in June 1997, victims no longer have to endure harassment, as the act has made stalking by someone unknown to the victim a criminal act.

'At first I was really excited - I thought it might be someone really nice - but as his information became more personal, I began to get concerned'



Lucy, whose e-mail stalker told her: 'From what I'd seen, you appeared to be a bouncy, bubbly, smiley person, the type I'd like to know'

John Lawrence

Causing fear of violence carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and/or an unlimited fine, while causing harassment carries the threat of six months in prison, and/or a 25,000 fine.

However, a spokesman for Scotland Yard admitted that if the unwanted attention came from abroad, via the Internet for example, there would be little the law could do.

Patrick, 26, had to call in a lawyer when an innocent exchange over the Net went badly wrong. "My flatmate and I came back from the pub one night, we'd had a bit to drink and started playing on the Internet. We went into one of the chat rooms and met a young lady from Kentucky who said her husband beat her up."

Patrick left the room for five minutes and his friend gave the woman his address. Within days, Ralph Lauren shirts and long, handwritten, perfumed letters started arriving at his flat.

"She said she was going to come to England to get married to me and have my children. At first it was quite funny. She also told me that she had inherited a farm in Kentucky, and was I going to move out to Kentucky with her?"

Patrick's admirer started sending photographs of herself with progressively fewer clothes on, until she was naked, and continued to tell him all about her life and her marriage problems. Over a six-month period he received 40 letters, which he never answered. "Then I got a letter saying she was divorcing the guy, and I was going to be named in a divorce case in Kentucky. I panicked at that point. I was really scared that she was going to turn up in London."

Patrick, who works in a bank, decided things had got out of hand and called in a lawyer to ask her to leave him alone. He received only one letter after that, saying, "I knew you

would forget me". He has decided to steer clear of chat rooms in future.

Computer communication is, in the main, harmless, but its anonymity provides the perfect cover for those wanting to harass others and, in a sinister twist, people can and do disguise their addresses, or use other people's PCs to protect their identity further.

"You can be anything. You can pretend to be any sex, any age. You can lie about what you look like, or anything. It gives complete anonymity," says a spokesperson for Novell, a software company that has carried out research into spamming and cyber-stalking.

"It is important to keep your address to yourself. Don't give it to chat groups. Once it's on the Internet, you're open to spam, and open to cyber-stalking."

Debbie, 28, who works from home as a market researcher, regularly

gave out her e-mail address on the Internet when she first went freelance, and made a lot of contacts. "One was very friendly and I thought, 'I don't want to be rude', so I replied. He seemed okay at first, but became strange and obsessive."

If Debbie failed to give an immediate response to his messages, he would complain: "Why haven't you replied to my e-mail today? Where have you been?"

For the next six months, Debbie found herself bombarded with e-mails that became increasingly offensive and obscene. She tried to reason with her antagonist, but once he realised she was upset he simply stepped up his attack.

"The messages got personal, pornographic, and also violent, which was very intimidating."

The cyber-stalker used a number of PCs, or would mail her from a cyber-café to give the appearance,

at first glance, of being a legitimate client. Generally, the messages took the form of old-fashioned dirty phone calls, with questions about her underwear and various obscene sexual propositions.

"If I had been working in an office, I could have gone home and left it behind; but my office is in my house, so it is very personal. You feel you've been violated, that they have got right into your house. It's as if they've got a direct line to you, and you can't help wondering if they somehow know your address."

In the end, Debbie hit back with a "very strongly worded e-mail", threatening to call in the police and "sue the pants" off her stalker, which seemed to do the trick.

"You have to remember," she points out with hindsight, "that there are a lot of wierdos out there; and with the Internet you get access to all of them, all over the world."

Don't nanny your nanny

Honesty is the only policy if you want a stable relationship. By Gwenda Joyce-Brophy



Even Mary Poppins flew the coop in the end

"WHEN ONE of my best friends poached the nanny it was worse than if she had gone off with my husband"... "Just as I thought I had settled the nanny in with the twins and made the decision to go back to my architectural practice, she left..." "The new nanny had a clutch of certificates in first aid and swimming, and she was great with the baby. I had only been in my job for a month when she went."

Tales of nanny turnover abound from the disappointed, frustrated or apologetic parents they leave in their wake. Yet it is a myth that nanny turnover is high everywhere, that money is always the root of the problem and - crucially for working parents - that it is inevitable.

True, London, with its pockets of high double-income earners and expatriates who are willing and able to pay top salaries, has lifted the demand and thus the market price for a good nanny, which is inevitably tempting to footloose nannies.

London, however, is not the UK. "There is probably less nanny turnover outside the capital," says Lella Potter, whose Cheshire-based Bunbury Agency is in its 50th year. "Outside London there is a lower concentration of nannies and so fewer opportunities for people to see, and bag, a friend's nanny."

Yet many households can suffer high turnover wherever they are located and whatever the prevailing market forces. It is generally acknowledged that too frequent nanny changes are detrimental to children, while the endless search-and-hire process is time-consuming and stressful for all - yet most nannies, according to agencies, are not motivated solely by money and want to settle with a family.

So what can exacerbate - and reduce - turnover? Charlotte Breese and Hilary Gomer, authors of *The Good Nanny Guide*, do not mince their words: "Women worry when they have a high turnover of nannies

in a short time that it reflects badly on them. They are right, it does." The motto should, it seems, be "Know thyself" or at least "Be honest with thyself". Employers may say what they want but do not always know what they really want. Nor do they always interview perceptively. But it is these factors that lay the foundations for the relationship, for "it is about compatibilities as much as capabilities" says Ms Potter.

Jackie Lewis has run North London Nannies since 1983. "Nanny turnover is a subject close to my heart, and the most important thing is dialogue, dialogue and dialogue. You need to make expectations clear at the start. It is no good, two days into the contract, saying: 'Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you that the toilet needs cleaning.' If employers are in doubt as to what is acceptable they should bounce off ideas with an agency, saying: 'We want the nanny to do this, is it fair?'"

Sue Redden, a training and

recruitment consultant, has put the "talk, talk" philosophy into practice. "You should never forget that, however much part of the family the nanny becomes, it is still an employer-employee relationship, and the nanny deserves respect as such. We hold 'catch-up' discussions regularly and appraisals twice a year, including a salary review. I also decided right at the start that we would be honest with each other about any niggles that otherwise would drive the other mad." It is a strategy that seems to have worked; the nanny is now in her third year.

And then there is the big question: live-in or live-out nanny? "The turnover of live-in nannies can be greater because of the strain on all parties," say Breese and Gomer, a consequence apparently of the loss of privacy to all parties, of the effort involved in living alongside someone else (remember flat-sharing?), as well as any unresolved issues relating to the usurping of the par-

ents' role. And that hot potato, the boyfriend, is also less sensitive if the nanny lives out.

Investing time in good matching at the start will pay dividends. If you doubt your own interview/judgement abilities or want broader experience than you have, find an established agency that you trust to do it. Be honest with yourself - and the agency - about what you are really looking for from your nanny. Know your tolerance level about having someone else in the house. Possibly a live-out nanny may suit you better if it is practical. Be realistic. Nannies do move on - even the "practically perfect" Mary Poppins did in the end.

The Good Nanny Guide: The Complete Handbook On Nannies, Au-pairs, Mother's Helpers and Childminders is published by Ver-milion at £14.95; the Bunbury Agency is on 01329 260148; North London Nannies is on 0181-444 4911

You ask the questions

Such as, Howard Marks: How can someone who's smoked as much dope as you remember things with any clarity?

Howard Marks, 53, was born in Kenfig Hill, South Wales. In 1984, he went to Balliol College, Oxford, to read physics. After university, he carved out a career smuggling large quantities of marijuana and by the mid-Eighties, he was Britain's most wanted man. He had 43 aliases and ran 25 companies as drug-running front organisations. Eventually he was extradited from Spain to the US where he spent seven years in prison. Married with four children, he is the author of *Mr Nice*, his autobiography.

Introduce yourself to a stranger who has never heard of you in one sentence.

Rick McEwen, Brighton
I'm a temporarily unemployed dope smuggler.

Hash or weed?

Jon Cox, Oxford

I prefer the strongest hash to the strongest weed. These days, however, street weed is generally far stronger than street hash.

What's your favourite type of marijuana?

Simon Roberts, Shepherd's Bush
Very strong skunk.

Colombian Gold, Zero Zero, Afghani Black - which is your favourite tripple?

Daniel Myers, Camden
If we are referring to the best of each type offered, my favourite is Afghani Black.

Would you ever consider writing fiction? If so, what would you write about?

Rob Peel, Nottingham
I have considered writing fiction but have no reason to believe I would be any good at it. I'm sure that if I did make any attempt, I would be too nervous to stray away from drug-smuggling plots.

In your book you go into great detail about your drug-dealing, recounting dates, phone calls and locations exactly. How can someone who smoked as much dope as you did remember things with such clarity?

Shay Parsons
There are two main reasons:
(1) Dope does not appear to adversely affect that part of my memory.

(2) Under the United States Freedom of Information Act, I was able to obtain copies of all documentary and electronic evidence that the United States Drug Enforcement Administration had amassed against me. They amounted to several dozen boxes and contained detailed observation reports. Consequently if I needed to know where I was and what I did on a particular date, I would consult the appropriate observation report.

Do you find that you have to live "up" to the role of professional criminal?

Alice Morgan
Crime is no longer my profession, and when it was, I pretended it wasn't. So there's nothing to live up to.

Does the naïve adoration of your audiences affect you?

Ditto



All adoration does.

Do you find yourself seduced by your own publicity?

Ditto
I am aware of that danger and do my best to avoid it.

Do you feel concern about your association with and contributions to the coffers of organised crime and the IRA, when we know all too well the suffering they can inflict?

Ditto
Organised crime has penetrated everywhere, including most legitimate businesses. New York garbage collection, for example, is entirely Mafia-controlled. This is well known by the dustmen, but appears to present them with few ethical problems. It is no more surprising to find the Mafia participating in drug-dealing than dealing in any other commodity or service. Given the large profits engendered in the trade of illegal recreational drugs, one can expect their participation to be enthusiastic.

Although I did smuggle hashish with someone who claimed to be an IRA man, the IRA officially denied that he was a member. I am utterly opposed to any activity which results in the slaughter of innocents.

Nevertheless, I must admit I pay scant attention to which organisation an individual belongs. I make my agreements on an entirely one-to-one basis.

How have you become so actively involved in the club scene, and what motivated you to do so? Which producers/DJs do you hold in high regard, and what album you reach for while "relaxing"?

Paul Stewart
There has always been considerable overlap of drugs and music. My book turned out to be popular with members of the dance culture. I like today's tunes. The rest followed naturally.

I particularly like Tricky, Sid Shanti and Derek Delarge. At present, my relaxation is provided by Red Snapper's new album, *Making Bones*.

How much hash do you smoke per day?

Matt Myers

Between 20 and 30 joints.

When you met Iain Sinclair and Marc Atkins coming out of the M15 building opposite Millbank (while they were researching the book

"Lights out for the Territory"), what had you been doing inside?

Jon Cox

Actually, it was M16. I was not allowed further in than the foyer.

How close do you think we are to the legislation of cannabis in the UK and how do you see the current explosion in drugs such as Viagra and the new slimming pill? **David Hall, Maidenhead, Berks** Not close. Viagra sales make the illegality of cannabis appear even more hypocritical and ridiculous than it has been so far. But hypocrisy is no bar to a politician's progress.

Do you still have problems with the police?

Susie Harris, Camberwell

Not at all. Many of them, particularly senior ones, share my views.

If you hadn't got into dope, what do you think you would have done instead?

Ed Sinclair, Sheffield
I would have become a teacher; a profession I greatly enjoyed.

At the front of your book, you say you're considering a career in law. What area? Why law?

William Crook, Epping Forest
During my years in prison, I was a jailhouse lawyer. When I was released from prison, I thought I could use some of my experience to enable early release of prisoners. But that was before I was offered an advance to write a book.

What's your worst memory of being in prison?

Graham Garner, Epsom
It changes, but is often the day I heard that my son Patrick had jumped off a roof and broken his legs.

Do you feel that becoming an unofficial spokesperson for getting stoned has given you licence not to grow up?

Jules Ferguson, Glasgow
I have never objected to the process of growing up and have not consciously attempted to slow down my own progress in this regard.

Accordingly, I have not sought such licence. I do, of course, accept that the age of today's average pot smoker is far less than it was.

What's the most paranoid moment you've ever had while smoking dope?

Anon

I have never suffered from paranoia.

How do you feel about your children experimenting with soft drugs? Have they read your book, and what do they think of your past?

Clare Budd, Banbury
I neither encourage nor discourage drug use. I know they are more likely to experiment than not, which is why I am against prohibition.

My three oldest children have read my book. As much of my past is their past, it's a difficult question to answer.

My children are aware of my strengths and my weaknesses.

How would you rather spend the next 24 hours: tripping on acid, pissed on vodka, stoned, or all three?

Steve Hunter, Wirral

Obviously, all three.

What's your all-time favourite album?

Tina Turner, Edinburgh

Blonde on Blonde, by Bob Dylan

What are you doing right now and what can you see in front of you?

Lizzie Forgy, Colchester

I'm in Edinburgh psyching myself up for my last performance at the Edinburgh Film Festival. I can see monuments.

If you were invisible for one day, where would you go and what would you do?

Pattie Lewis, Stoke Newington
I would plant cannabis seeds everywhere.

NEXT WEEK: SOPHIE DAHL

Please send any questions you would like to put to Sophie Dahl, the size 14 model and granddaughter of the children's novelist Roald Dahl, to: *You Ask The Questions*, Features, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL; by fax on 0171-293 2182; or e-mail them to yourquestions@independent.co.uk by lunch time on Friday 4 September.



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NOTICE IS GIVEN pursuant to the Companies Act 1985 (Section 173) that an extraordinary general meeting of the above named company (the Company) convened and held on 27th August 1998 special resolutions were passed:

1. approving a form of contract (providing for the purchase by the Company of 120 A Ordinary and 343 B Ordinary Shares at 10 pence each for the aggregate sum of £36,665); and
2. authorising the payment of all the said sum out of capital.

The statutory declaration of the directors of the Company and the auditor's report required by the Companies Act 1985 (Section 173) are available for inspection at the registered office of the Company at 31/31a Stafford Road, Croydon, Surrey CR9 4PH.

An creditor of the Company may at any time within the 5 weeks immediately following 27th August 1998 apply to the court under the Companies Act 1985 (Section 176) for an order cancelling the resolutions or for other relief.

C. Parsons, Secretary

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IRRITATIONS OF MODERN LIFE

13: SMALL STICKERS ON FRUIT BY OLIVER BENNETT

ALL THINGS are branded. We have to accept this as a fait accompli of capitalism. Normally I believe that only killjoys hate branding. Packing, labelling and the sundry other ephemera of mercantile society - it is all there to be enjoyed. But not little stickers on fruit, which are sent simply to try us. Why should these innocent-seeming interventions annoy me so much? Partly it is the nature of the product. Fruit should be pure, graceful, unadorned. As the first and final foodstuff to be tasted before the onset of original sin - one can say with some certainty that Eve's apple bore no sticker - fruit somehow remains primordial, sensual and carefree.

Fruit is a food of the gods. Suffice to say that there is a romance to fruit that cannot help but be corrupted by the hard-edged world of marketing. Of course we all know that fruit is just another product, and marketing influences our choice. But when did a sticker on a fruit ever influence someone's decision to buy one apple or pear over another? Very rarely, I would bet, for this is surely one sector

where the actual appearance of the product - its shape, colour and freshness - provides the incentive to purchase, not the packaging.

Okay, the market rationale might be that the label strengthens brand recognition and lodges in our memory, making sure we feel good about Costa Rica, Bonita or New Zealand Reds and functioning as a quality control. Possibly, I also accept that stickers alert consumers to the provenance of the fruit, which may have a function in enabling us to make enlightened geopolitical choices - those tell-tale stickers may have helped the politically righteous to avoid Cape Grannies all those years ago. But these are negligible benefits.

It is not as if marketing itself is the problem. I even begrudgingly admit that some fruit stickers can carry memorable graphics - the blue oval that once told us one's banana came via the Fyffes corporation somehow adhered to the memory bank. But even when they are attractive, they still seem to perform no real function apart from to be a sticky nuisance. Not

only do they create unnecessary labour on the production line, they also create unnecessary work for the consumer, who has to peel them off and remove the inevitable gum stain.

The issue gets higher-key when the sticker goes right onto the epidermis of fruit such as apples and pears. Even after washing, there often remains a bogey-like smudge. And then, after peeling off, they are extremely difficult to throw away. Like old sticking plasters, they seem to end up in some part of oneself - sole of foot, back of jacket - where they taunt you from an invisible position.

But I am fighting a losing battle: there are growing hordes of fruit sticker aficionados, particularly in the US, where there is a fashion for people to put them on their fridge doors. There is a fruit sticker fanzine from Austin, Texas with the odd title *Please Stop Sticking*. And there are the websites, "Stickers enhance nutrition!" proclaims one. Fruitbats, the lot of them. As far as I am concerned one message should ring loud and clear - Keep Fruit Naked.

Denmark's Greta Garbo

Actress Bodil Kjer rejected Hollywood, found fame in her homeland and international acclaim at the age of 70 in *Babette's Feast*. But she still has one regret. By Marianne Gray

BODIL KJER is a household name in Denmark, even if she barely gets a mention outside the arthouse foyer in the UK. Admittedly, this is something of a cliché in the ghettoised realm of European cinema, but there are not many film stars who are able to claim, as Kjer can, to have lent their name to their homeland's equivalent of the Oscar: the Bodil.

This week, the 81-year-old Kjer, star of 60 films, more than 100 plays and countless radio and television productions, is undertaking a rare visit to London to attend a gala screening of one of her greatest films, *Babette's Feast* (1967 winner of the Best Foreign Film Oscar), which on Sunday opens

novella from which Axel adapted his film. Kjer, part Simone Signoret, part Katherine Hepburn, is nevertheless playing down her role as the Grand Old Dame of Danish cinema. "I will only be reading part of my interpretation of *Babette's Feast*, otherwise it would take all night! The whole thing is more than two hours in length, almost as long as the film."

At a time when most actresses of her age are in their dotage, Kjer is headlining in television, booked for more stage work and would love to do another film. Since 1965 alone, she has played Hermann Broch's gruelling Celina on stage and, until last year, she was touring with A.R. Gurney's *Love Letters*. Her co-star in Gurney's two-hander was her husband and longtime acting partner Ebbe Rode, who died two months ago, aged 87.

"I wonder why I've continued to work for so long," she laughs. "Maybe it's because I am very shy and when I work I am not shy."

"Next year, for the 250th anniversary of the Royal Theatre [in Copenhagen], I am working on stage in a Karen Blixen story. I will play a witch."

The Royal Theatre has a personal significance for Kjer, too: she made her stage debut there in 1937. Theatrical success came quickly, with a variety of roles in anything from Shakespeare to *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Once she had overcome a shaky start in film – her first review read "lifeless, bereft of sex appeal, cool and almost trivial" – she was carrying films by the mid 1940s. Again, she thrived on her versatility, throwing herself into comedy – *My Wife Is Innocent* – and Denmark's attempt at a Hollywood musical, *Meet Me in Cassiopeia*.

Kjer also took roles in more typical Scandinavian fare, in particular the wave of social realist cinema initiated by writers like Leif Panduro and Klaus Rithjerg.

Over the years, she consistently turned down offers to work in Hollywood and abroad, and demurs at comparisons with Greta Garbo. "I have had a wonderful life here in Den-



Bodil Kjer as she was in *Jenny and the Soldier*, left, and above in *Babette's Feast*

mark and it doesn't seem to be over yet," she remarks. "Why change it? Going away was never a priority when the possibilities for me here were so prestigious."

The last time she was in London, it was over 30 years ago to visit friends such as Laurence Olivier, Vivien Leigh, Michael Redgrave, Spencer Tracy, stage designer Oliver Messel and director George Cukor. As for America, from where the phone rang many times with offers of work, she went there only once to spend a few days in New York sightseeing with her second husband, Svend Bergsøe,

a businessman.

Kjer has only worked in English very occasionally, most recently in Robert Mitchum's 1995 film, *The Sunset Boys*, a World War Two drama shot in Norway. "I've never regretted 'not exporting' because I always thought you explain yourself best in your own language," she explains (in English).

Kjer has always lived near Copenhagen. At her big white mansion near the sea, 20km out of town, she says life is very quiet. She lives alone with a housekeeper ever since her third husband, set designer Olaf Nordgren, died. Her two step-daughters from her

marriage to Nordgren visit often. She is happy to be there, far away from the city.

So what, if anything, would she have liked to have done?

"I know I would not have liked to have taken up the offers of Hollywood fame in the Forties," she says slowly. "Truly I have absolutely no regrets. Except I would like to have been a great cook and I think it might be too late now."

Bodil Kjer will be reading at the Gala Screening of *Babette's Feast* on Sunday 6th September, National Film

WITH THE spectacle of the Russian and American presidents playing farce and bedroom comedy on the international stage, you might think a Soviet-American theme for bank holiday Monday's afternoon family Prom would be ill-conceived.

Not a bit of it, however, with Ronald Corp firmly in charge of the conductor's baton. Renowned as the hero of the recent British light music revival, a choir trainer and himself a noted composer, Corp promised high jinks and taxi horns for his afternoon's entertainment – nothing to do with the White House, this, but relating instead to the opening and closing works of the concert, Gershwin's *Girl Crazy* overture, and his classic tone poem, *An American in Paris*.

Corp's New London Orchestra, led by David Juritz, caught the 'in Pan Alley mood' of these scores to their last nuance. Readings that were full of ebullient personality sparked with delicious brass and woodwind solos. *Girl Crazy* led to girl dowdy, music in glass-slipper mood, with spiky excerpts from Prokofiev's *Cinderella Waltz*, scored, or so it seemed, for solo side-drum and orchestra. Steven Osborne, rounding off the first half with his Proms debut in Shostakovich's Second Piano Concerto, offered much to admire in his shapely phrasing of the slow movement, and then the finale, delivered at breakneck tempo yet staying on the rails to the end.

After Kabalevsky's dashing *Colas Breugnot* overture – a welcome revival – Christopher Maltman, baritone, caught the childlike ease of five of Copland's Old American Songs – "The Gift to be Simple" and "The Little Horses" especially – with touching informality.

The bi-national theme was

PROMS

NEW LONDON ORCHESTRA, LA PHILHARMONIC ROYAL ALBERT HALL

continued in Sunday's evening Prom, the first of a pair from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and Esa-Pekka Salonen. His family hails from Polish and Lithuanian Russia, and Copland, doyen of American 20th-century composers, caught the essence of Mexican popular dance styles in *El salon Mexico*, opening the concert in spectacular style. With the brightness of West Coast sunshine in their playing, the Los Angeles band was well adapted to the clean-cut texture of this pellucid score. Its response to Copland's bouncy syncopations was vigorous and alert.

Both here and in the UK premiere of his own *LA Variations*, an homage to the city where he had made his home, Salonen conducted with energy and precision. His new piece, which is divided into 18 sections, used a schematic form of serial chords composed out into parcels of invention that were clearly defined by their different orchestral costumes. Though rhythmically vibrant, the score was also coloured by quieter inventions: for example, some impressive double bass writing at the end of section eight – impressively played.

The orchestra's fine bass tone was heard again in the brooding introduction of Stravinsky's *Firebird* ballet, which was sumptuously rendered in utter unity of purpose. Though somewhat thin on the ground for a holiday concert, the audience demanded an encore: Prokofiev's *Death of Tylak*, delivered to its complete satisfaction.

NICHOLAS WILLIAMS

Memoirs of an inadvertent spy

'Bourgeois-liberal' Timothy Garton Ash was once under investigation by the East German Stasi.

Now the Oxford historian has got his hands on the file and has written a book about what he found there. By Michael Glover

TIMOTHY GARTON Ash, senior research fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford, a scrupulously watchful and courteous English historian of perhaps 43 or 44, sits in a chair facing the window of his study in Church Walk, a marvellously sequestered enclave just off the Woodstock Road. His small, fine fingers are steepled and his head is bowed, preparing the words to meet my words. He is broad of jaw, and with an extraordinarily finely trimmed ginger beard. Albeit, his serene, questing face reminds me of that of some 19th-century explorer – as if it would come into its own in sepia.

My compact tape-recorder – he admires its compactness – stands on a dangerously high pile of books with such titles as *Consciousness Explained*, *Autobiographical Moments* and *Liberal Nationalism*. Sunlight floods the room. It couldn't be better weather for a longish, measured conversation about dictatorships, spying, infirmities, and the general evils of the Communist past.

Though not a regular contributor to the British press these days – you are more likely to read his essay-length exercises in political reportage in the *New York Review of Books* – Timothy Garton Ash is a great expert on these dark matters, but especially in so far as they relate to the countries at the heart of Europe. He has written a history of Solidarity, whose painful and exhilarating bringing to birth he witnessed at first hand; another about the revolutions of 1989; and a big book about Germany, a history of Ostpolitik which, unsurprisingly, provoked passionate debate within the country itself.

But perhaps his most extraordinary, and certainly his most intimate, book, just published by Flamingo, concerns the file – all 325 pages of it – that the East German secret services kept on him during the time that he was living there as a research student from 1979 onwards. They knew that



Historian Timothy Garton Ash
Tara Heinemann

he had been a regular commentator on central Europe for *The Spectator* – or "Spektator" – in the GDR informer-speak of his file – and that, being a journalist, he must therefore be a spy because, well, in their opinion all Western journalists were spies.

In a sense, though, he was a kind of spy, was he not, I asked, because while he had purported to be a research student working on a history of the German resistance to Hitler, he was also simultaneously collecting information in a clandestine way for a quite different book about the GDR itself, and the way in which it suppressed its peoples? (The research was never completed, though it may be some day. The clandestine book about the evils of the GDR was written and published in West Ger-

many in 1979. It was even serialised in *Der Spiegel*.)

"You mean a spy for the reader?" he asked.

"Mm, someone who was apparently working on something, but in fact was working on something else."

I explained to him that when I had read *The File*, I had had a very strong sense of almost boyish enthusiasm on his part for the general idea of spies and spy literature.

"Not quite," he replied. "I'm actually not very interested in spying, though I was as an undergraduate. What I liked was the idea of being a soldier behind enemy lines. This was a very nasty regime indeed, and I liked the idea that I could do something against it with my pen. The commitment was simply a necessary means to that end. The other day I had a conversation with a Chinese dissident who's just been released after 16 years in prison. He said, quite without prompting by me: 'if anyone wants to write properly, honestly, critically about China, they have to work like a spy.' And I think that's true of such regimes."

An interesting distinction. So I pursued the matter a little further. I explained to him that I had only the shadowiest of notions of how he had set about gathering the information that was published in that book about the GDR. Was he asking, I wondered, seemingly innocent questions of seeming friends which weren't in fact innocent at all?

"I depended who I was with. If it was someone I really trusted, I told them what I was doing. If I was with a member of the Central Committee, I didn't, of course, and most of those who informed on me, as it turns out, were somewhere in between. Then he put the point a little more forcefully. "I myself use the trope of the spy for the reader, but I really don't think there are any moral comparisons between dissimulation in the service of a book and dis-

simulation in the service of the secret police."

Perhaps not. Books are such harmless things. After the reunification of the two Germanies, the Stasi files were opened for all to see. Garton Ash returned to Berlin and read the file on him – all 325 pages of it – documenting his movements day by day. It induced a kind of vertigo.

Who was the real Garton Ash? The "object" described with such loving attention by his informers? The man of his own memories of himself? The man as he is described in his own notebooks? How much of the self is imagined, and how much real? And how did this affect the way he subsequently thought about the writing of history?

"All history hitherto has been written with a rather simplistic assumption about memory, namely that what you have to confront is either forgetting or deliberate distortion by someone putting their own spin on the story – as Trotsky did when he wrote his history of the Russian Revolution. What you find with this experience of reading the file is that we all have this novelist in the head who is constantly rewriting the story in ways that make it more comfortable for us. This is neither simply forgetting nor distortion. It's something else. There is a new book called *The Mind's Past*, written by a neuroscientist, which argues that there is something in the left hemisphere of the brain called 'the interpreter' which is doing exactly this – reinterpreting fragments of experience to make a continuous narrative, to make sense of our lives."

If this is true, history needs to be written in a different way. But how? I asked him. The answer began with a brief historical excursus. We need to go back to Thucydides, he replied. From Thucydides to the 18th century, people generally thought that the best history was contemporary: the history you'd witnessed.

"A lot of my work has been this kind of

history of the present. Nowadays that's called journalism, and professional historians preserve their virginity by keeping 30 years of distance. You should start writing history now. And the other point is that we should be more sophisticated in how we describe what people are doing when they reminisce, when they write autobiography,

'A lot of my work has been this kind of history of the present. Nowadays that's called journalism, and professional historians preserve their virginity by keeping 30 years of distance. You should start writing history now.'

when they write their own history."

As I listened to him forming his sentences with such practised ease, I began to think about his own history – and about, for example, his political classification by the Stasi, which had shifted from "bourgeois-liberal" at the beginning to "conservative and reactionary" at the end. Where did his own political – and party-political – allegiances lie?

"Bourgeois-liberal" is spot on," he replied with some relish. "I always say ich bin ein Berliner. By which I mean an Isa-

iah Berliner. I am absolutely a classic Isaiah-Berlin-type liberal with a small 't'.

And so I asked him the second half of the question again.

"And your party-political allegiances?" "Well... I... I... I don't belong to any British political party, and that independence is very important to me as a writer. But that 'liberal' with a small 't' will give you some idea."

Charmed – but not quite charmed enough – by his coyness, I asked him straight out.

"So you voted Lib Dem in the last election?"

"Yes, I mean, since you ask, yes I did, but I wouldn't necessarily say that to be – and this is an important point – that to be a liberal with a small 't', believing as I do that individual liberty is the most important single political value, means that you have to vote Lib Dem in every British election. Right?"

A little later, down at the local pub, an interesting scene is played out. After we have ordered our sandwiches, the woman asks for the name. "Michael," replies Garton Ash. "I always give them a different name," he confides to me.

"Do you know his real name?" I ask the woman. No response. Perhaps she hasn't heard me.

As we walk away he tells me that the best one was undoubtedly "Salman". When the sandwiches were ready she called out "Salmon!" He chortles and chortles into the sleeve of his beige linen jacket.

"Were you with Salman himself?" I ask him.

"Oh no," he says. "I was with Ian McEwan."

Such playful complicity between historian and novelist. No wonder he outwitted the Stasi.

The File is published by Flamingo

Village hall panto makes for a comedy of errors

"THE D'OYLY Carte Opera Company is Gilbert and Sullivan," declared a hopeful previewer last Sunday. If only! The truth is, they were Gilbert and Sullivan until that malign moment in the Seventies when the Arts Council pulled the plug on them.

At the time, the operatic establishment sneered, but the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company represented an unbroken tradition going back to the fountainhead. And if their routines were creaky, their singing was a delight, and their acting gloriously in keeping with the pre-

posterous demands of their material. But that company was killed stone-dead: the D'Oyly Carte now strutting their stuff on the South Bank is an ersatz concoction.

But you have to admire their temerity in bringing, of all things, *The Mikado*, to the stage. For this was the opera with which Jonathan Miller proved that Gilbert and Sullivan doesn't have to be frumpy, provincial, amateur dramatic stuff for village halls. His black-and-white Twenties version for ENO had the whiplash elegance which the original must

have had 100 years ago. And he succeeded where others had failed, because he took Gilbert's sophisticated comedy seriously, and let Sullivan's peerless score work its spell.

So what do we find on the South Bank? Carefully contrived ENO echoes in the opening Japanese-like silhouettes, but thereafter, unmistakable echoes of the village hall. For this show – presented by Raymond Gubbay – is quite simply a throwback to pantomime. Indeed, Eric Roberts's Ko-Ko is pure Northern panto, completely at variance with the

THE MIKADO
ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL
LONDON

comedy's graceful urbanity: this never was, and should not be now, a "children's show". And the pantomime muse is even more disastrously invoked by the costumes, designs, lighting, and choreography, which are all the last word in tackiness.

Choreography is too grand a word to describe the movement here: I've seldom seen a more rag-tag bunch. The town band of Tripp come on still

feverishly adjusting their shoes and hats, while their limbs fly in all directions; the three little maids don't move like a threesome at all. A work like this has to be perfectly drilled, but one has no sense here of the necessary blood, sweat, and tears.

The costumes come in a cacophony of colours, combining Viking with 16th century Venice, Japan with Thirties prop-box. Ko-Ko's get-up is a fright, while the Emperor's is ludicrously out of scale. The lighting and sets, which should provide continuity, instead

change their game every couple of minutes.

The director, meanwhile, throws away all the work's great moments, dissipating their focus and blurring the contrast between quick-fire brilliance and slow expansiveness. Yet he had a talented cast, with a vocally splendid Emperor (Lynton Black), a perfect Katisha (Jill Pert), and a Nanki-Poo (Joseph Shovelton) who sings like a dream. Thanks to them we still – intermittently – have a rip-roaring time.

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There's a space for us, somewhere

What is the recipe for good theatre design? As the RSC considers a complete rebuild of its Stratford home, David Benedict assembles the essential ingredients for the perfect stage

The rake's progress

This title may be a Stravinsky opera, but the term "rake" describes the slope or tilt of a theatre's seating and/or its stage. As anyone who has peered in vain through the heads of parents at a school play staged on the flat floor of a gymnasium will attest, raked seating which allows you a (supposedly) uninterrupted view is A Good Thing.

Everything depends on the angle. The Barbican's welcome statistic that no seat is more than 65ft from the stage should be offset by the fact that the seats in the uppermost circle are so high above the stage that not only do you get a prime view of which actors are going bald, but anyone suffering from vertigo is likely to faint dead away.

Conversely, if there's too gradual a rake – for example, as at The Mermade Theatre – those at the back can't see what's going on at the front of the stage. It also tends to mean that the seating stretches so far back that people end up sitting miles away from the stage.

Raked stages are also for the benefit of the audience, not for actors, who almost universally loathe them. Being seen by everyone is just dandy, but trying to stand up straight on a really steep rake is like being strapped into high heels, and about as good for your posture.

Following the acclaimed Richard Hudson/Richard Jones *Too Clever By Half* at the Old Vic, no late Eighties modish set design was without its perilously raked floor, which did wonders for the directorial concept and the private practices of osteopaths across the land. This was trumped by the deliriously bad *Troubadour* at the Cambridge Theatre (set in 13th-century Narbonne, natch). This understandably shortlived wonder of the musical world had a perfectly sublime scene in which two people sat on a bed (don't ask) playing a crucial game of chess with an outside chess set. The rake was so steep that to stop the pieces sliding off they were fixed to the board with less-than-period velcro making the game's smooth and natural progress a little, shall we say, sticky. (It was the least of the show's problems, but it proves a point).

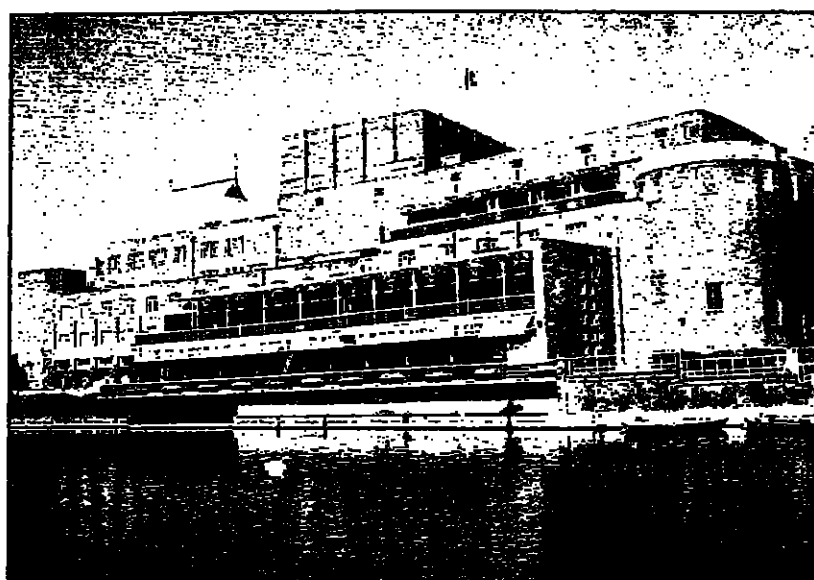
Handsome is as handsome does

Most people's idea of what a theatre looks like is based solely on the Victorian and Edwardian designs: lots of red plush, fancy curtains and loads of gilt and gingerbread. The interior decoration of the Old Vic is like a fantastic wedding cake but it's hard not to be diverted by it all.

Many traditional 19th-century theatres, particularly those built by Frank Matcham, are acoustic marvels but they have their problems. The stage is often too high creating a gulf between the actors and the audience, who have to crane their heads back and get no sense of the depth of the stage. Then there's the proscenium arch. Some directors feel this sets up a divisive "us and them" feeling which mitigates against the all-important sense of contact and immediacy. Many playwrights wrote for proscenium arch theatres, but Shakespeare certainly didn't. The arch came centuries later and many 20th-century theatres have successfully done away with it. But theatres built both before and afterwards have all sorts of advantages (see below).

All the world's a Globe

Leaving aside the debate surrounding its authenticity, this really is designed for its audience. Everyone has a good view of the stage, but it's best



Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford, top left. Royal National Theatre, above right, and the Globe Theatre, Southwark

to go the whole hog and stand. In most theatres the strongest position to stand is centre-stage towards the back. Not at the Globe. In this theatre, an actor standing towards the front of the stage can play directly to the crowd. He or she can also see everyone, rather than playing to a black sea which is what you see when looking out at the audience under stage lighting.

A sight for sore eyes

The first thing a touring company does upon arriving in a theatre is to check the sightlines from the auditorium. Can the whole of the set and acting area be seen from all the seats? Despite the best intentions of a designer who will have built a set with the touring venues in mind, the answer is almost invariably "No." This necessitates rejigging the actors' moves and sometimes the entire set so that everything can be presented to its best advantage.

Some theatres try to get round this with what they politely term "restricted view seats". Warning: the correct response to this is "How restricted?" If, as in Glyndebourne's superb new auditorium, it means you have to put up with an unobtrusive handrail to stop people hurtling over the balcony, don't worry. However, if it means you get to pay for the pleasure of examining the moulding on a particularly fine pillar, think about another night. Some seats in the beautifully restored, National Trust-owned Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds aren't great in this respect, but on the other hand it has excellent acoustics, and actors love it because the atmosphere is intimate. Happy actors tends to mean good shows.

Little boxes

It must be hell being in the Royal Family. Imagine having to watch everything from the top right hand corner of the auditorium. You wind up with a stiff

neck and have a perfect view of nothing but the wings on the opposite side of the stage. The point about boxes – or "ashtrays" as Dame Edna calls them – is that they were designed as places in which to be seen rather than to see from. It's lovely to sit there waving to your friends while seated with your mistress, a magnum of champagne and groaning platters of smoked salmon (or so I'm told) but you are utterly removed from everyone else and, unlike cinema, theatre is a collective activity. Don't believe me? Try sitting through a play with only a handful of other people. It's embarrassing for all concerned. Watching a film in an empty cinema on the other hand is a positive relief: no noisy popcorn eaters or rabid talkers.

Small is beautiful

Ian McKellen – currently belting out *An Enemy of the People* to 1,500 people a night in Los Angeles –

has played in more than a few theatres in his time and has come to the conclusion that small is beautiful. "In a theatre the size of the Olivier or the Barbican you can end up with a design that necessarily gives the audience something to look at but which dwarfs the performer. It's the closeness to the performer that really matters. My taste is for about 100 seats. Whatever the shape, everyone should be able to see the actor in considerable detail without amplification or binoculars. A measurement could perhaps be, can you hear the actor sigh and see him or her breathing?"

The Barbican's studio space, the Pit, was never conceived of as a theatre. It became one only at the last minute, when someone spotted its potential. Despite a recent partial rebuild, the very low ceiling of the studio makes it claustrophobic rather than intimate. (And in terms of discomfort, it's up there with The Bush).

The National's versatile Cottesloe studio theatre is much better, but that has problems with the audiences in the side and upper galleries that sit cut off from the body of the theatre; they often find themselves sitting behind or above the actors. The acres of dead acoustic space to the back and sides mean that actors have to project as much as in the Olivier, which seats three times as many people.

The problem with the Lyttelton, the National's third venue, is that although the sightlines are good with the seating no wider than the stage, actors feel as if they're playing two distinct audiences. Laughs in the circle come later than those in the stalls.

Reality check

If all theatres seated no more than about 400 people in close relation to the actors, everyone would be happy? Er, no. Small spaces are useless for spectacle. Who wants to see *Phantom* without Maria Bjornson's sets with the famous chandelier crashing down over the auditorium?

It's a question of economics. Theatre is labour-intensive, and costs are high. Unless the Government changes its thinking on arts subsidy (and pigs will doubtless develop an air force before this happens), theatre managers will want large size auditoria in order to make money on ticket sales (17.5 per cent of which goes straight back to the treasury in VAT).

Commentators much given to moaning about Covent Garden's prices smugly point to the Met in New York. "Look," they say, "it's much cheaper and it receives no public subsidy." Yes, and it just so happens that it has double the seating capacity.

Anti-subsidy forces cite the Donmar and the Almeida as small theatres doing excellent work on little public money. True, but they do it on the backs of people who get paid just £250 a week. That's about £41 per day, ie £3 an hour. Without wishing to be unkind, that's fine for millionaires like Kevin Spacey but tough on an average Equity member who may then be out of work for the next few months.

A perfect relationship

The Young Vic is loved by many. The audience – 350-500 – is comfortably wrapped around the stage yet the "in the round" configuration means that only certain productions fit there. In many ways, though, it's close to what Peter Brook famously described as "the empty space", the artistically ideal set-up in which a company doesn't have to fight an over-plush auditorium with no leg-room in order to create work for an audience in optimum circumstances.

Razing the building in order to raise the roof

Why knock down the Stratford main house? Adrian Noble, Artistic Director of the RSC, makes the case for artistic renewal

FOLLOWING A fire that destroyed the original 1879 Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, the present Royal Shakespeare Theatre was built in 1932, designed by Elisabeth Scott. It was renowned, Peter Brook tells us in his memoirs, that she impressed the selection committee with her watercolours. Originally seating just over 1,000 people, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre has been coddled, reshaped and revamped until it now has a capacity of 1,450. The foyers and lavatories (like all amenities of the period, designed for women with astonishing bladder control) are, however, still geared to the much smaller capacity. With the opening of our beautiful Swan Theatre, built in the burnt-out shell of the original theatre, the mighty audience arriving at the same footprint of land has practically doubled from that originally intended.

The essential problem of the auditorium is that, as designed, the actors are put into one room and the audience in another, with an invisible wall dividing them. Shakespearean drama demands a radically different relationship. Furthermore, since the Second World War there has been a healthy, quite unstoppable urge for actor and audience to get close to one another. There is an added, almost unique difficulty in Stratford if you sit in the balcony, which houses almost one-third of the audience and is where most of our young patrons sit. The balcony was placed not only above, but behind the dress circle, disadvantaging the audience by distance and the actor by vastly increasing the volume of air he must command with his voice. Remember that Shakespeare talked of "hearing" plays, not "seeing" them. The experience up in the balcony has

been described as looking through the wrong end of a telescope. The fact that thousands of us have had extraordinary theatrical experiences sitting in the gods is testament more to the actors' genius than to any architectural merit.

Successive artistic directors have tried to break down this invisible wall by progressively extending the stage into the auditorium: Peter Hall in 1960; Trevor Nunn in '70 and again in '76; Terry Hands in '75 and again in '82; myself in '88 and '92. Each of us has tried to bring the actor closer to the audience, to place him or her into the cradle of the audience's imagination.

The question facing us today is why scenery is such a difficult and sensitive issue in Shakespearean production. The stage picture must not limit the imagination of the audience. Shakespeare's words create a world; space is created through



Noble: 'Break down this invisible wall' Gerard Lewis

as well as a literal universe. This is why scenery is such a difficult and sensitive issue in Shakespearean production. The stage picture must not limit the imagination of the audience. Shakespeare's words create a world; space is created through

the actor's imagination and body. The text also creates its own unique sense of time.

For me, Shakespeare is the quintessential Renaissance artist, the supreme humanist. After the flat two-dimensional medieval period, the world turned round, and Man, not God, became the centre of the universe. This is directly reflected in Shakespeare's drama and in the theatre architecture in which it was performed: a character on a platform, the earth; with the sky, heaven, above him; with the underworld, hell, below him; surrounded by all humanity, all social classes, all the world – the Globe.

The lessons to be learnt from Shakespeare's own theatre are obvious. First, the actor and audience share a space. Second, the volume of the space is not too big. It works within our human limitations of physical size and vocal capacity.

Third, the audience is stacked vertically, with some above the actor's sight line and others below.

Fourth, the buildings were made of wood – good for acoustics.

By the time Shakespeare died, theatre architecture was changing rapidly, reflecting massive social and political change. Perspective theatre, imported from the Continent, had arrived. Audience and actor were separated into different rooms, and pictures were presented. There was one perfect seat, the King's, and the remainder of the auditorium was arranged to reflect a class-based social order. Amazingly, we have been building theatres in the same mould ever since.

In my view, a theatre should not just be a place where plays are put on, but a focus point for a community. For us in Stratford this means a local, national and international community who love Shakespeare

and want to be close to that nexus of stage, grave and birthplace. A theatre should be an inspiring place in its own right, a home for all the performing arts – musicians, painters and sculptors – and we are particularly blessed in that the Royal Shakespeare Theatre sits in the cradle of the arm of the river Avon as it winds past weeping willows to Holy Trinity Church.

The secondary activities – eating, drinking and buying souvenirs – that have grown up around great buildings since the Middle Ages make a major contribution to a theatre's finances and I'm certain they will become even more crucial in future, reflecting the world's increasing commercialisation. This juxtaposition of the temporal and the spiritual strikes me as being especially appropriate to the theatre, and if it helps to spread subsidy further, then I'm all for it.

BITE:98

"THE MOST EXCITING SHOW SELLERS HAS DONE"
LA TIMES

DIRECTOR PETER SELLARS • COMPOSER TAN DUN

A CONTEMPORARY OPERATIC
ADAPTATION OF THE 16TH CENTURY EROTIC CLASSIC

"SEXUALLY EXPLICIT... SOCIALLY INCISIVE
... RAMPANT WITH METAPHOR"
PETER SELLARS

September 1998



INVENTING

Two godfathers of fingerpicking

KICKING OFF at the genteel hour of 7.15pm, this double header of "Sixties folk guitar legends" may not have been the most challenging of Edinburgh Fringe shows but it was unquestionably one that delivered the goods, and did so with the good-natured aplomb that comes with experience and that studied looseness of presentation unique to old-style folk performers. Here, no less, were two of its godfathers.

Best known, ignominiously, as a footnote in Rod Stewart biographies (they busked together long ago), Wizz Jones is in other ways a "Sixties" success story. Co-founder of that era's folk-blues boom alongside the altogether more enigmatic, druggy genius Davy Graham, Jones pioneered a

FOLK
WIZZ JONES AND
JOHN RENBOURN
FAMOUS GROUSE HOUSE,
EDINBURGH

version of the hippy lifestyle, eschewing the sex and drugs aspects of those he influenced, and is consequently still fighting fit – in body, mind and musical quality.

Wringing every drop of emotion out of deceptively simple finger-style patterns with a spasmodic physicality that makes his entire guitar a tremolo unit, Jones's material reflected both his positive idealism, his delta blues influences and his family values – unpretentious but moving songs for his late father

("Burma Star") and teenage daughter ("Lucky The Man") were compelling and rang true.

Less of a songwriter or singer, much more of a technician than Jones, John Renbourn's own set was effortlessly accomplished.

Perhaps – given that his first solo album in 12 years, *Traveler's Prayer*, has just been released – it was a nostalgia-focussed set, with old Pentangle faves "Watch The Stars" and his tribute to seafaring folly, "Lord Franklin", rubbing shoulders with adaptations of piano jazz material from Randy Weston and Abdullah Ibrahim.

Renbourn's wry banter lived up to his post-Pentangle reputation as a bon vivant and wit, but he's been peddling similar concert sets for years,

albeit with improvisation well to the fore. So it was particularly thrilling to see the largely unrehearsed duo set as a finale.

Archie Fisher's "Mountain Man", Bert Jansch's "Fresh As A Sweet Sunday Morning" and the poignant "National Seven" – a blues arrangement that Renbourn borrowed rather heavily from Jones, his old mentor; for his 1985 debut – gave Renbourn a rare opportunity to re-live his fluid, soaring lead guitar licks of yore and it went down a treat with the audience.

A clearly unscripted crack at Davy Graham's immortal "Angie" seemed an appropriate way to close a show that had balanced unashamed nostalgia with subtly reproven musical worth.

COLIN HARPER

A couple of weeks ago, the Commission



Adrian Lester, above, and Marianne Jean-Baptiste (Reuters)

Wanted: a brand new caste

Quite apart from the lack of roles, when a "black role" does come up, it tends to be

Casting a black actor, after all, should not be simply a question of installing a token black or filling a quota. Playing a character black creates entirely new resonances in a production. As David Harewood points out, black actors are clamouring to be used more, not simply in terms of their own visibility but also in terms of livening up the theatrical scene here: "In America, they've been playing with the whole notion of integrated black casting. What would happen if we cast this person because they are black; because they bring to the play their blackness?" If

Hugh Quarshie, a classical actor who has worked at the RSC and the National Theatre, and has a leading part in the new *Star Wars* film, argues that the problem

by Stephen Spender. But his real claim to fame is that for six years he appeared as Jeffrey the English butler in the enormously popular NBC television series *The*

"That was true for them," he adds. "I'd like to think it's not true for us now."

Laughing all the way to the sofa

A WIFE WITHOUT A SMILE
ORANGE TREE THEATRE
RICHMOND



Robert Workman

marriage where the wife

from Hamleys and elephantine.

artist friend (Nick Fletcher):

and eat the firm's biscuits," he idli-

PAUL TAYLOR

Despite the spectacularly opaque

THEATRE
THE BRIDGE
BOROUGH MARKET
LONDON

his sleep staged by a bunch of six-
formers. A shame. A real shame.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL TRANSFERS

YOUR GUIDE TO SHOWS TOURING AFTER EDINBURGH

Crave: Sarah Kane's sedentary, monotonous voices is an

Courses 17,18 Sept, part of the British Festival of Physical and

Feb. Arts Theatre, London WC2
(0171-836-2834)

Brecht's class-war comedy from the Right Size - the best theatre dou-

which performer Martinez and her parents engage in some home-

The Last Oblit: Angela Leasence's creepily comic mono-

Majesty's Theatre, London SW1
(0171-494 5400)

CLOTHES LINE



OUT OF THE CLOSET

DUSTY O - NIGHT CLUB HOSTESS EXTRAORDINAIRE, DJ, SINGER AND ACTOR - OPENS HIS DESIGNER LADEN WARDROBE BIG ENOUGH FOR TWO

"I STILL have Westwood 'Pirate' socks and a matching scarf I bought when I was 14. I've about 300 Westwood pieces, 150 of them vintage and last week I bought an original 'Pirate' suit from a stall on Portobello Road.

As a "girl" I wear a lot of McQueen, Galliano and Westwood - a nice structured suit, corseted with tight sleeves, theatrical looking but contemporary. I love anything glamorous and luxurious. Tracey Mulligan is another favourite. I'm wearing all her stuff in my press shots. Her black tube dress is wonderful.

As a "boy", I wear Raf Simons, Dries Van Noten and an Austrian designer, Carol Christian Poell. Jeans used to be a no-no, but being a total label victim, I bought a pair of Evisu and matching jacket. I washed them at least 40 times, banged them on the floor and

let the dog sleep on them before I put them on. I hate the way new denim looks.

My last fashion disaster was at Brighton Gay Pride. It was boiling and I was corseted in a leather Versace dress. I came off stage, dripping with sweat, looking like Zelda from *The Terrahawks*.

Most of what I earn ends up on my back, but designers do occasionally lend me stuff. Favourite shops are Westwood, Pellicano and my absolute favourite is The Pineal Eye.

I'm not doing "big wigs" any more. They're much sleeker now, blunt cut, square fringes. It takes me three hours to get ready, from showering and shaving to putting my wig and make up on. As my Mum always said: 'I don't like what you do, but you do it properly.'

INTERVIEW BY ADAM FULCHER

HOT THING

COLOURED MASCARA



EIGHTIES REVIVALISM is creeping back, but it's sharp rather than silly: more Brian Ferry than Boy George.

Coloured mascara is everywhere, but the starting point was surely the McQueen Autumn/Winter show (pictured), with white faces, pink lashes and contact lenses. This "albino chic" is a little high-maintenance but many cosmetics companies have caught on and toned it down.

Miners' "Double Trouble" (£2.49) resembled cottage cheese once applied. "You look like you've got pig's eyes!" gurgled my fat mate. Not wanting to be mistaken for a Tamworth sow, I thought I should opt for something more colourful. Rimmel's bright blue

(also £2.49) reminded me of my school disco days and its nostalgia gives it full marks.

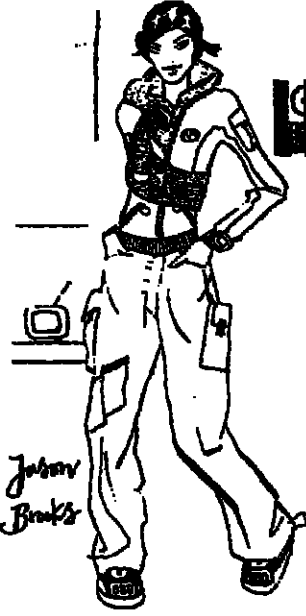
Other great options are the Stila coloured mascara (£14), out this month along with matching eyeshadows in more grown-up colours like grey and lilac. Miners' other range, "Cry Baby", has very good purple and blue waterproofs for £2.49. If you want bright, Sweet Georgia Brown (£4.50) has a wide choice. Finally, for a great McQueen red, there is Helena Rubenstein's "Spectacular" mascara. (£14).

Miners, 01264 350379; Rimmel, 01233 625076; Sweet Georgia Brown, 0171-836 3955; Stila from Space NK, 0870 6077060; Helena Rubenstein, 01733 741000

HANNAH HUNTER

FASHION TYPES

Utility Girl



Left, colourful shirts by Emilio Pucci. Expected to sell at auction for around £100 per shirt.

1950s ties such as these, centre, would probably sell for around £120 the lot.

Bustier and crinoline by Vivienne Westwood, centre left, c.1985, sold last year for £138 and £195 respectively.

Tapestry coat, bottom left, by Biba, c.1970. Estimated at £300-£500.

Fake fur coat by Ossie Clark, below, sold for £460 last year.



Bid for a Biba

The Retro look is chic yet again. Classic clothes by top designers are popping up all over the place, and auctions are the best place to pick up a bargain or pay for a turkey. By John Windsor

THE FLAMBOYANT gear of the Sixties and Seventies comes under the spotlight next Tuesday at Christie's South Kensington's annual auction of street fashion, now in its fifth year.

There is no catwalk. Coats, dresses and suits, designed by such ghostly names as Jean Muir, Ossie Clarke or Tommy Nutter, are held up limply by porters, as enthusiasts of retro fashion bid for them.

After decades in mothballs, these period relics are once again plunged into a mini-whirlpool of fashion, with its still-changing ins and outs, and inscrutable trends.

Prices are low. The typical lot is estimated at £150-£250 and hidden reserves (minimum prices) are seldom placed on lots estimated under £200. Lots are regularly carried off for as little as £23 for instance, a red striped velvet waistcoat "said to have belonged to Acker Bilk".

Although the sales regularly clear around 70 per cent of lots, they raise totals of only £40,000-£50,000 - hardly a money-spinner for the auctioneers, who keep them going because they look trendy and attract young new bidders. So bargain hunters benefit.

Ironically, the current hot ticket is not any of the big designer names, but Biba, the Kensington fashion and lifestyle shop that closed in 1974 (and has recently been revived). Its name has acquired cult status.

Where could you buy new a dashing Biba-style full-length tapestry coat, worked with a dense design of scrolling flowers and acanthus leaves with frogged fastenings? No couturier is designing such sumptuous pieces these days. The Next shops, then? Or Warehouse? Not a chance. You would have to have it made. The material alone would cost you about £160 - then add a tailor's bill of £500 or so.

The authentic Biba specimen for sale at South Ken on Tuesday dates from about 1970 and is estimated £300-£500. Designed for women, it would suit a slim, vain man. But even if you had one like it made up, it would still not carry the magic BIBA label. Just look at those puffy shoulders and elongated sleeves. A real period piece.

Biba buffs know the gear so well, that they will probably not be bothered by the absence of a Biba label on the three-quarter length fake leopardskin coat, estimated £200-£250, and cautiously catalogued as "probably BIBA". It's Biba all right; an identical full-length version with label intact fetched a whopping £460 in last year's sale, well above the estimated £100-£150.

A hoard of unsold stock from Biba's Paris shop is in the sale. There are five lots, each consisting of 10 T-shirts with Biba logo, 10 Biba logo pots of face powder, 10 of eye shadow, and a Biba plastic bag - enough to solve your Christmas present problem in one go. Estimate £150-£250 per lot.

Jean Muir's reputation has not survived the auctioneer's block. So if her classy, minimalist dresses in plain colours suit you, get bidding. At the last two sales, much of the clothing bearing her name - although without reserve - was left unsold. Which probably means that some people loathe it.

This year, the auctioneers have rejected most of the Jean Muir gear they were offered. But there are still two exclusively Jean Muir lots: one containing three of her typical jersey dresses, the other a loose-fitting black suede jacket together with a full-length alpaca coat, trimmed in leather.

They are offered, disdainfully, without estimate - which means that less than £200 is expected. Her suede pieces are the least unpopular. Somebody may get a bargain.

Zandra Rhodes's early printed textiles, which made her name, sell well, but are seldom expensive. Among Janet Street Porter's cast-offs which appeared in last year's sale, was a pleated coat of blue silk, labelled "A Zandra Rhodes Sample" with her famous "Indian Feather Sunspray" design of 1970. Estimated £200-£300, it made a respectable £207.

A Rhodes "Snail Flower" coat of about 1970 made £690 in a post-sale deal after failing to sell.

Six mid-Seventies Rhodes pieces - four dresses, a blouse and a shirt - are lotted together without estimate in Tuesday's sale. They are among 10 re-offered lots left over from the Street-Porter sale.

Rhodes's punk gear is less successful. Even a punk dress from her 1977 "Conceptual Chic" show was left unsold last year. The cult name in punk is still Vivienne Westwood. A pair of black sateen bondage trousers with an authentic label, "Malcolm McLaren, Vivienne Westwood, Seditionaries Exclusive", together with a Sex Pistols T-shirt, made £437 two years ago, more than double the £150-£200 estimate.

Leading the bidding for authentic punk memorabilia is a Brighton-based coterie of thirty and fortysomethings who both collect and wear it. They go for more seditionaries gear than Westwood's eleven-layer pink crinoline dress and brown leather bustier, which found buyers at £195 and £138 last year.

Nutter and Clarke enthusiasts should note that most men's clothes sell badly. A big Tweed Nutter suit in the forthcoming sale is without estimate. So is a suit, a shirt and a tie of his, lotted together. The dandyish Mr Fish, who once clothed Sir Roy Strong, is regarded as more historic. Expect to pay £400 for one of his velvet jackets.

To sell well, men's wear has to be flamboyant. Three traffic-stopping blouses by Emilio Pucci - a popular name - are estimated £250-£450. A bundle of Fifties ties, including Salvador Dali's "Spiral Into Space" raised £253 two years ago.

There is some cross-over with the pop memorabilia market. Clothes with doubtful provenance - like that Acker Bilk jacket - tend to end up in Street Fashion sales. Others are genuine "association" items. A Dior gentleman's anacrona full-length coat of about 1974 made £805 - helped by the fact that it had once been owned by Klaus von Bulow.

Beware the whims of the saleroom. A pair of transparent yellow rubberised ankle boots by Mary Quant fetched an astonishing £690 two years ago. A scarlet pair fetched the same price. As a result, four more identical pairs appeared at last year's sale. Not one of them found a buyer.

Street Fashion, Tuesday 8 September (2pm); Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (call 0171-581 7611)

Dress for action

Burn those frills. Chuck out the pink. It's back to wartime utility wear with a difference – time for Civilian Clothing 1998. By Tamsin Blanchard

This time last year, the shops were brimming with lacy slip dresses, embroidered cardigans, frilly edges and floaty fabrics. The buzz-words were "pretty", "romantic", "feminine" and "sweet". It was enough to make a grown woman reach for the nearest chocolate bar. But, somehow, fashion had decreed that we all wanted to look girly-girly and as sweet as sugared almonds.

Quite why any grown woman would want to look like a little princess dressed prettily in pink is a mystery. As it was, there was little else to buy in the shops, and we didn't have much choice. Not surprising, then, that this autumn there has been a complete U-turn. Suburban Stepford Wives are out (thank the fashion gods) and urban Tank Girls are in. The last few remnants of shades of pink and beaded fabrics are being crowded out of the rails by a relentless army of grey, khaki, Velcro, zips and rugged drawstrings. As is so often the case with fashion, we have gone from one extreme to another. Khaki is the new pink; utility clothing is on the march.

Paul Sexton and Talita Zoe, owners of the influential Covent Garden store Koh Samui, saw the backlash against frills coming last spring and they ordered their collections for this autumn accordingly. "The feminine thing all got a bit too much," says Sexton. The new season's collections are much more pared-down and basic in shape.

At Spirit, the one-stop fashion emporium on the ground floor of Selfridges in London, the labels include Red or Dead, Warehouse, Diesel and Miss Selfridge. The shop floor is a microcosm of high streets up and down the country and from one rail to the next, the story is the same. At Diesel, there are Army jackets, fatigue pants, hooded fleece tops, nylon zip jackets, sweat tops, and body-warmers with practical pockets. Lots of them. There are reflective fabrics, so that you will be seen in the dark. These clothes are tough, hard-wearing and thoroughly practical. Warehouse has a whole utility collection with Army bags selling at £20, and well cut Army green moleskin drawstring combat pants for £60.

Upstairs at Selfridges, there is a whole area dedicated to the new Virgin label, not designed by Richard Branson. Far better, however, to buy the British unisex label YMC which, since it was launched in 1996, has been key to the look that will be remembered as "so Nineties". Kenneth Mackenzie's label 6876 is for men who don't like fuss or branding, and his talents have been secured by Caterpillar, the boot people, who have seen the niche for a clothing label designed with the same philosophy as their footwear. His first collection for Caterpillar will be available in autumn 1999.

Urban utility sportswear has been an underlying trend throughout the Nineties. When the Japanese chain Muji opened in London in 1991, its greatest selling-point was the lack of branding and logos. A mug was a mug. A grey cotton vest was a grey cotton vest. And a pair of sweat pants was a pair of sweat pants. It was all so uncomplicated. Muji has just opened its latest shop in the UK and the expanded clothing range has never looked so right. There is not a frill or an unnecessary detail in sight, whether the product in question is a pair of trousers or a teapot. The denim aprons worn by the shop assistants are the look of autumn/winter '98.

At the same time as Muji was sweeping through the fashion-conscious conscience, Massimo Osti was developing his own labels specialising in low-branded, functional clothing for men and women, after his success with the menswear brand Stone Island, and a small design team in London called Vexed Generation was setting up shop in London's Newburgh Street. Both Osti and Vexed Generation were exploring hi-tech clothing using industrial fabrics, with an eye on urban survival as well as fashion credibility. Army uniforms and industrial workwear formed the basis of their designs. Often, the clothing's functions and implied political statements – built-in anti-pollution masks, bullet and radiation proof fabrics – far outperformed the everyday needs of the average customer. But the influence of both Massimo Osti and Vexed Generation on mainstream fashion this autumn has been phenomenal.

It takes a great hike of the imagination to make a link between the uncompromising extremes of Vexed Generation and the comfort and safety



Main picture
Fleece top, £60, canvas body warmer, £70, work trousers, £44, and cap, £25, all by Caterpillar (0171-722 2132)

Above from left to right
Crinkle cotton army green 'Lanto' jacket, £140, by Diesel (0171-833 2255)

Wool boiler suit, £135, by The Edge from Jigsaw Menswear (0171-499 2521)

T-shirt, £14, and cargo skirt, £28, both by Gap, Long Acre, London WC2 and branches nationwide

of Marks & Spencer. But such is the current obsession with utility clothing and functional sportswear that the M&S design team has taken note. There are silver reflective Puffa jackets, dresses, rucksacks, tops and body-warmers, all made out of fleece and complete with rugged zips, drawstrings and hoods; no-logo trainers in reflective silver and red; and lots of Army pockets, even on a pair of khaki sweat pants adapted from the ubiquitous fatigue pants that have become the Nineties answer to jeans. The look has even been developed into childrenswear.

Likewise Prada, the Italian luxury fashion brand. When Miuccia Prada moved the family company from bags and leather goods into fashion in the early Nineties, the clothes were stark, minimal and reminiscent of Army uniforms. This autumn, Prada has moved into the sportswear market with a Sport line that includes chunky trainer shoes with rugged Velcro fastenings, balaclava hoods, reflective anoraks and heavy-duty nylon rucksacks. Fabrics include

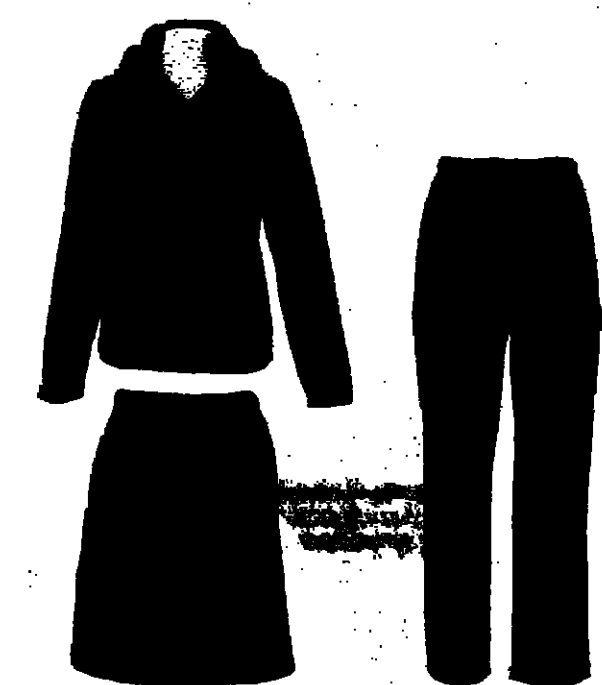
stainproof nylon waterproofed with Teflon, waterproofed wool, Scotchguard-coated nylon gabardine, and windproof, arctic fleeces.

The last time fashion was so useful was in the Forties, when the government launched the Utility Clothing Mark. The letters CC41 (Civilian Clothing 1941) were crudely stamped on to clothes that were deemed practical and frugal enough to be produced in wartime Britain. As Colin McDowell writes in his book *Forties Fashion and the New Look*, "it was the nearest thing to a civilian uniform in the history of dress." More than 50 years on, the world may be on the brink of recession but it is relatively at peace. There is little need for utility restrictions in clothing. Indeed, although the style and shapes of these clothes may be close to a uniform, the fabrics used are anything but stringent or economical.

But then, if you want utility clothes at utility prices, you can get the look from your local Army & Navy or from a well stocked camping store.



Hooded jacket and balaclava cap, both from a selection by Prada Sport (0171-647 5000)



Fitted hooded top, £23, skirt, £18, and fatigue pants, £25; polar fleece rucksack, £20 and trainers, £35, all by Marks & Spencer (0171-935 4422)

TRY ME

Skin-tight and slinky and strictly for the boys

If you thought men only wore tights in Shakespearean plays, think again. They could be an essential male item this winter. By Adam Fulcher

FROM MID-OCTOBER Wolford launches "a world first in the luxury market" – tights for men. Why? Apparently, the Wolford Men collection will fill a gap in the male undergarment market, providing men with appropriate clothing for business and leisure. The thick (black only) tights are designed to provide warmth without being obtrusive. With this in mind, I put them to the test and have to admit they were surprisingly comfortable. But they aren't without problems. Never having worn tights before (horror, how do you put them on without shredding them with a less than perfect pedicure? Childhood memories surfaced of my Mum bunching up her tights and gendyrolling them onto her legs. So far so good. The tights, made from a stretchy "opaque cotton velvet knit", were very snug. Wolford have very helpfully designed them with a Y-front pouch, so no problems there, and the brief-style seaming around the bum gives an instant lift. The press blurb saying they provide a "perfect fit" is quite true.



Looking in the mirror, I laughed. My legs looked smooth, black and very slim, which is not a sight I'm used to. The next step was to go out in them, discreetly hidden under a pair of jeans, of course. Thankfully, it was a cool day and I didn't over heat in the tights. In fact, they kept me surprisingly cool. It must have been the "actively breathing cotton". But there was a strange stretching sensation around my knees when I walked, almost like having a slightly loose second skin.

Another peculiar aspect was being aware of the tights but not my jeans. I felt like I didn't have any jeans on. I glanced down more than once to make sure by some awful twist of fate I hadn't walked out in a pair of tights and trainers. This sensation didn't wear off through out the day but probably will if you wear them on a daily basis.

And if you do, what about washing them? Instead of just chucking a bundle of smalls in the wash and turning on, I found myself fretting and looking for washing



instructions. At £39 a go, you can't be too careful. Machine washable at a low temperature, a specially made hosiery washing bag is available. Alternatively, Wolford advised me to "use a large sock". I chose the latter and they came out good as new, not like a pair of cycling shorts with little feet attached.

Reactions from friends ranged from "they're a gimmick" to "I'd wear them only if I was going to Iceland" to "do they have a hole for your willy?" but I was perfectly happy with them.

The tights border on dull, though. Perhaps some discreet sequin detailing or more cheery colours might jazz them up. Will they become part of my winter wardrobe? That's between me, myself and I. A man's got to have some secrets....

Tights for men are available in small, medium and large from Wolford boutiques and major department stores. For stockists call 0171-935 9202



Caring for your family from beyond the grave

If you are run over by a bus tomorrow, make sure your spouse and children are provided for.

By Rachel Fixsen

How would your children cope if you died? It is upsetting to think about. If they are young, you would not be there to give them the start in life you had planned. But by making a will and ensuring you have enough life insurance, you can go some way to extending practical care beyond your own lifetime.

Partly because it is such an unpleasant subject to contemplate, many parents do not insure their own lives. "Nine times out of ten, they [breadwinners] are not covered and the state is not going to provide what they think it's going to provide," says William Meston of Winsec Financial Services, a firm of independent financial advisers.

Working out exactly what life cover you do have is an essential step before considering buying insurance. Financial advisers are bound by law to carry out a full fact-find on a particular client, to find out what their assets and liabilities are, before advising them which life products to buy, says Mr Meston.

If you belong to an occupational pension scheme, for instance, it may have a death-in-service element which would pay out a lump sum and pension to your spouse. And it is vital to make sure any debts, including a mortgage, would be repaid.

Life insurance comes in many forms. Term assurance covers you for a fixed period. This is generally cheaper than whole of life insurance, which remains in effect until you die. When buying protection for children, parents would usually only need their life cover to last until the youngest child has grown up.

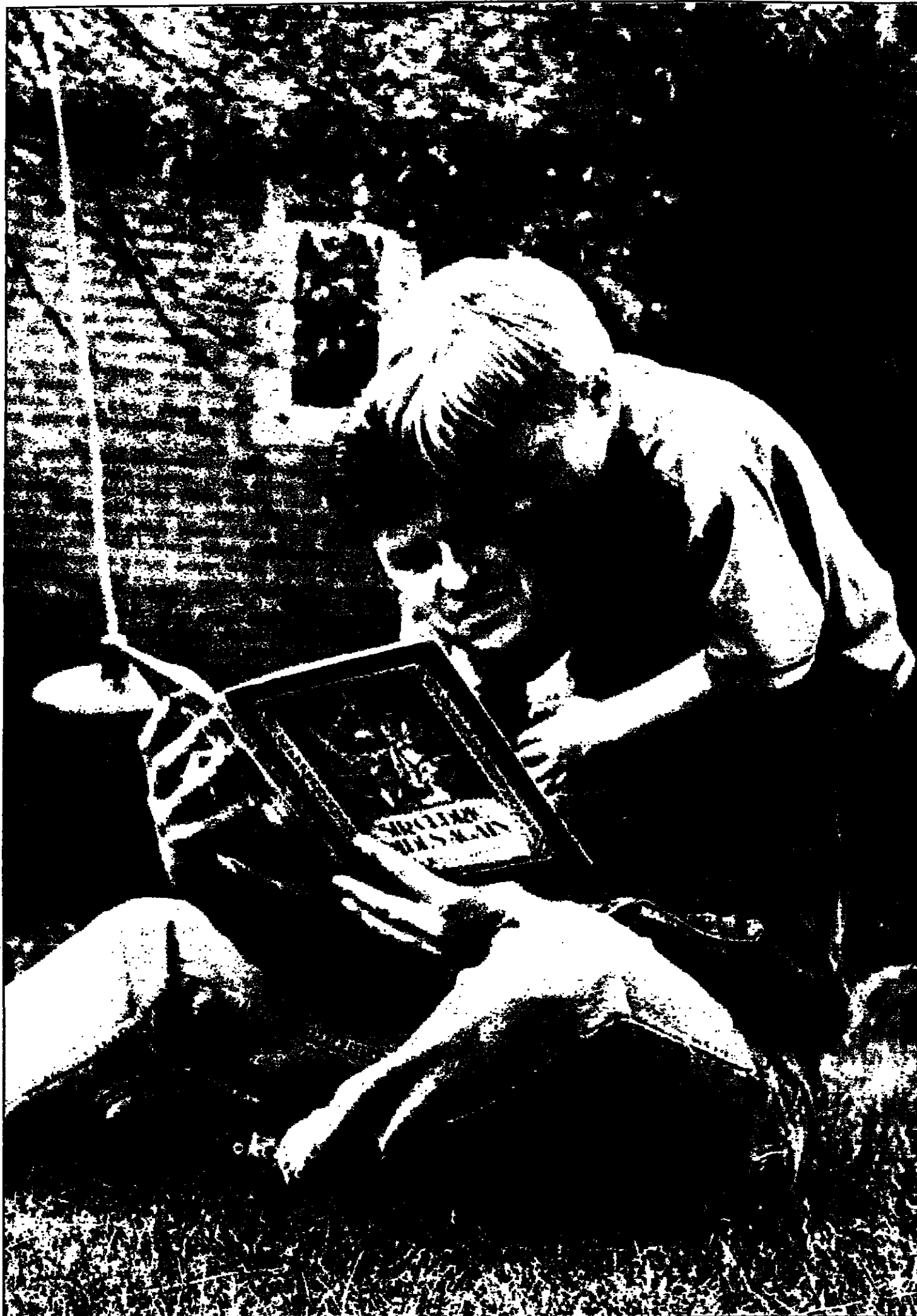
How much cover should you have? "We insist that people have up to 10 times their salary in cover, and that doesn't include their mortgage," says Mr Meston. For example, a man earning £20,000 a year would have insurance set to pay out £200,000 on his death. Well-invested, this sum could provide an annual income of between £10,000 and £12,000, he says.

A cheaper way of providing dependants with an income is Family Income Benefit insurance. "It is not only cheaper but in a more suitable form," says Clive Scott-Hopkins of Twy Law, another firm of independent financial advisers. This is a type of term assurance which pays out tax-free regular income rather than a lump sum which you would then have to invest.

Insurance may protect your children from financial disaster, but how about ensuring your last wishes are carried out in other respects? Making a will can be crucial.

You may believe you have a simple family structure and in the event of your death your assets would simply pass to your spouse, if he or she outlives you, and your children if not. But it is dangerous to assume this.

Estimates suggest 60 to 65 per cent of people die without making a will, although most of them have estates worth less than £5,000. If you die without making a will, the



Few parents contemplate the need to provide for their children in the event of their death

John Lawrence

intestacy rules apply. These can be very complicated, but generally the first £125,000 of your estate is passed on to your spouse if you have one. The rest of your assets are then shared with any children you had or other relatives if not.

In a will, you can make clear who you would want as guardians to your children, were you and your partner to die together. If this happened and you had not specified, a court would decide who should bring your children up. The task would not automatically fall to the children's next of kin or godparents.

Unmarried fathers do not have the same rights as married fathers as far as care of their children is concerned, unless specified in a will.

Inheritance tax is another consideration. If your estate passes to your spouse, or if its taxable value is no more than £200,000, then no IHT is generally payable. But in the absence of a will, some of your money may pass to your children and possibly become liable for inheritance tax at 40 per cent. It is worth getting specialist advice on this, either from a solicitor, accountant or financial adviser.

There are various ways of making a will. Solicitors are professionally qualified to draft them, and could charge between £30 and £125. Alternatively, banks, insurance companies and will-writing companies could help you draw one up. However, some banks may require you to appoint them executor of your will, which can mean extra expense for your beneficiaries after your death.

Which? the consumer magazine, found in 1996 that no type of will-writing professional was much better than others, though solicitors wrote the most wills rated as good.

WH Smith sells a Willwrite system, which costs £25.50. You complete a questionnaire which is sent off for drafting, then back to you for signing. The Law Society warns against doing it yourself by buying a form at your local newsagent. "After you have died there will be no chance of double-checking with you what you had in mind. So often the wording in a home-made will is capable of at least two contrary interpretations," it says.

Winsec Financial Services: 01603 762388; Twy Law: 01753 868244

Let your cash grow with the market flow

THE FIXERS



RODDY KOHN

First-time investors can overcome their fear with some basic rules

WHO AMONG us can forget their parents' admonition: "You've made your bed, now you'll have to lie in it." I was reminded of this when Mary Nightingale came to ask me for advice on the stockmarket.

"What do you want to know?" I enquired. Mary replied: "Well, on the surface my dilemma seems straightforward. I want to invest my capital. On the other hand I keep reading about the FTSE falling, recession looming and the Asian crisis. It's all so off-putting."

Mary was beginning to sound worried, so I tried to calm her down: "Look, only this week I met a couple who had the same feelings as you. Despite having a capital sum of lottery proportions they almost felt immobilised by the vast array of choices and the mixed messages they got from friends and so-called experts. So let's start by trying to define what we want this money to do."

"Grow," said Mary, with a smile.

"I was hoping for just a little more definition. How about choosing a point in time when you might want access to the money, bearing in mind you generally shouldn't look to invest any money for less than five years."

"Does that mean I can't get my hands on it if I need to?" she replied.

"Not at all, but as soon as you invest there is always the risk that it may go down in value, and, ultimately, what you get back will be heavily influenced by market conditions at the time," I advised her.

"That sounds quite frightening."

"Maybe, but there is no such thing as 'risk-free' investment. Even if you put your money into a building society, you are still running a risk. It is the risk that over the years inflation might eat away the buying power of your savings."

My client said: "OK, when you put it that way I can see the point in having a spread of investments. But which ones?"

"Well, we have agreed that five years is a reasonable investment period, so next we need to identify where in the world you would like to invest."

"Not Japan," she replied hastily.

"OK, but we can be a little more scientific and measure how risk-averse you are, on a scale of zero to 10."

I then guided Mary through this scale, starting with zero equalling cash and 10 equalling China, Russia and similar types of highly risky markets.

"I'm getting the hang of this," said Mary cheerfully. "What's next?"

I replied: "Well, now we can start talking about your tax position and what it's likely to be in the future. We have to remind ourselves not to let tax be the tail that wags the investment dog. But we need to choose investments that are within the level of acceptable risk and are sympathetic to changing circumstances either personally or through changes in taxation."

Mary asked: "So I can split my investment up according to differing timescales, levels of risk and terms of investment?"

"Now you're getting it," I cried. "So if you want more of your money in low-risk investments for when the stockmarket is jittery, you simply need to invest in those areas between zero and four. When you think markets have settled, then choose to invest in higher-risk funds."

"How will I know when that time is?"

"This is where practice and theory part company. What you invariably find is that anyone can tell you with hindsight exactly when this moment comes. In the absence of such wisdom, the only way to proceed is to

'There is no such thing as risk-free investment - even if you put your money in a building society, you run a risk'

spread your capital around or have a "diversified portfolio", as it's known in the business. This sounds rather grand; in reality it simply means we should choose investments that don't duplicate whatever you have in, say, your pension fund or existing PEPs."

Mary said: "I like the sound of that approach, but what if I am still nervous of investing in a falling market?"

"We can begin by choosing 'capital secure' and 'guaranteed' products offered by companies like HSBC. This fund manager has a capital-protected PEP which allows you to invest up to £9,000 in four stockmarkets around the world at very little risk."

"That sounds too good to be true," Mary retorted.

"Aye," I said in my strongest Yorkshire accent. "It is very true that you get out for now these days, so next month we will look at the price you pay for such a guarantee."

Roddy Kohn is principal at Kohn Cougar, a firm of independent financial advisers, at Wellington House, Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2UR (0117 9466384). Mr Kohn was also the author of 'The Fixers' column on August 5

Why health insurance should be judged by its cover

Ten essential questions you should ask before taking out, or changing, your policy. By Andy Couchman

FOLLOWING RAPID expansion in the Seventies and Eighties, private medical insurance has hit the doldrums in the Nineties, largely because premiums have continually outstripped inflation. Despite that, and most people's passionate support for the NHS, medical insurance remains popular with many, especially those for whom a NHS waiting-list could threaten their livelihood as well as their health.

What cover have I got? Many insurers have a range of different policies; some giving very comprehensive benefits while others exclude out-patient benefits in order to save money. Check that you have the cover you want and that it covers you want it to. If your present insurer cannot offer the cover you want, shop around. Beware, though, that if you have suffered any medical conditions (even apparently minor ones) since starting your policy, any new insurer may

exclude that condition from your cover, so you could be worse off.

Am I covered for pre-existing conditions?

You may be asked lots of medical questions and then have certain conditions excluded, or you may be subject to a moratorium. That is where you are not covered for pre-existing conditions for a minimum of two years and until you have been free of treatment, including regular check-ups, for two years. The Office of Fair Trading does not like moratorium underwriting, because it thinks people can be confused about what cover they have.

Insurers that offer it argue that it gives the opportunity to become covered once you have been treatment free for two years. Some insurers give a choice while, if you are covered under a company policy,

there are likely to be no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

What is your track record on premium inflation?

In a recent report, the Office of Fair Trading also asked insurers to tell their customers what their track record has been on price changes. The cost of insurance goes up as you get older, with most insurers having five-year age bands so, once every five years, your premiums are likely to increase significantly anyway.

Every year, though, your premiums are likely to go up, mainly due to the rate at which medical costs are rising. New techniques can mean better treatment, but often mean higher costs, too. Gissings, a firm specialising in this area, says that GP fundholding means that more patients are being referred to their insurers for treatment.

What are you doing to keep your costs low?

You may now have less cover or less choice or your insurer may have imposed tighter control over the fees your consultant can charge. That could mean having to pay any excess yourself, so you should always check with your insurer before undergoing any medical treatment.

Are there restrictions on hospitals I can be treated in?

There are around 600 independent hospitals and NHS private wings in the UK, ranging from small hospitals up to large hospitals with international reputations. To keep costs low, many insurers now have a preferred list of around 120 hospitals, which have agreed special prices. The downside is less choice, and your chosen consultant may not work at the hospitals on the list.

Is my local hospital included?

Most patients go to their local hospital for minor treatments, and to a specialist or teaching hospital for more complex conditions. Now, shorter hospital stays and more day-case treatment (you go home the same day after your operation) mean it can make sense to shop around to get the best treatment, even if that means travelling further.

Can I increase my benefits?

Most people tend to stick with the cover that they originally chose, but new products can mean better cover may be available. For example, some policies now include free travel insurance, so if you travel or holiday abroad you could save money even by choosing a more expensive policy. Check on any restrictions that may apply before making any move.

How can I reduce my premiums?

There are three main ways to reduce costs:

- Choose a policy with less cover. One way may be to exclude out-patient cover. While a single out-patient consultation is likely to cost less than £150, a course of treatment, perhaps over many months, could easily negate any initial savings.
- Pay an excess. By agreeing to pay the first £50-250 of each claim, or each year's claims, you could save up to 25 per cent of your premium.
- Read the small print. Some insurers offer a no-claims bonus, and paying a one-off small claim yourself could mean paying a lower premium next year. Paying annually could save 5 per cent. If you have joint cover with your spouse, and they are some years older or younger than you are, it could be cheaper for you to each have individual cover.

What is your customer complaints procedure?

Most insurers are members of the Insurance Ombudsman Scheme or use the Personal Insurance Arbitration Service. Ask your insurer how many complaints have been referred and how many it has lost - that could give an indication of how generous they might be.

How do I claim?

Ten years ago, claiming meant filling in a claims form and hoping the insurer would pay. Now, most run telephone helplines staffed by qualified nurses, and some offer medical information even if you are not claiming. If you do need treatment, the last thing you want to worry about is whether you are covered and how much you may have to pay yourself, so a telephone helpline can be a valuable benefit.

Andy Couchman is publishing editor of HealthCare Insurance Report

Pamper your pet with a personal policy

We all love our pets, and with vets' bills ever increasing it makes sense to insure them.

By Katherine Storey

Taking out household contents insurance and motor insurance is automatic. Buying travel and medical insurance is nothing out of the ordinary. Insurance for our pets is, however, a relatively new idea and, as with all good ones, it is expanding at a spectacular rate.

The market leader, with 42 per cent of the UK's pet insurance business, remains Petplan, the firm founded some 22 years ago. However, in the past two years Petplan's dominance has been under increasing challenge from a wide range of other providers, while the market has itself grown massively. There are now more than 1.5 million owners who hold insurance cover for their pets, a figure which grows every year.

Adrian Webb, of Direct Line Insurance, which 14 months ago launched a new service in insuring cats and dogs, says: "Pet owners should not see pet insurance as a luxury anymore. Veterinary costs can be high, which many owners do

not discover until it is too late." One of Direct Line's first claims was for a Scottish terrier which was fitted with a child's pacemaker, obtained from Great Ormond Street Hospital. The operation cost £2,490.

Other typical treatments which carry high costs are, for example, £850 for treatment for a three-year-old cat involved in a road accident, £800 for a dachshund with paralysis of the hind legs following a slipped disc, and £1,500 for a Labrador with arthritis that needed a hip replacement.

Cats and dogs are not the only animals catered for in the pet insurance market, although they are the most commonly insured. Petplan entered the equestrian insurance market in 1988, and is now the market leader in this field. Rabbits can be insured by Petplan, under its relatively new scheme, Rabbit Plan. Cover is also available for more exotic pets but is only offered by a few companies.

There is a variety of cover available, most including veterinary fees for accident or illness, death from accident or illness, advertising and reward for recovering a lost or stolen pet, holiday cancellation cover should your pet fall ill immediately before you go on holiday, and boarding kennel fees should you have an accident or fall ill. These come under a



Insurance can ensure that your beloved pet gets the best care available

lan Torrance

number of different premiums depending on the scheme that is chosen.

However, as when taking out any sort of insurance, you should read the small print of the policy in order to check what is covered and what exclusions there are. A report on pet insurance, carried out by

Which? magazine, says: "You won't be able to claim for the costs of vaccinations or routine examinations. Neutering and pregnancy, and elective surgery for pregnant animals, aren't covered, although complications arising from pregnancy may be covered."

"In some cases you may not

be able to claim for particular diseases or conditions for certain types of animal. For example, retrievers can be affected by a hereditary eye disease, and Cavalier King Charles spaniels are prone to heart problems. Many policies won't cover these complaints, or will offer only limited cover for them."

Direct Line, which offers a bereavement help line on the death of your pet.

One aspect of cover provided by most pet insurers is that of third party liability, usually for dogs and horses. In this age of litigation, this type of cover is becoming more and more vital. As an owner, you are responsible for your animal's actions, including its less desirable ones.

For example, one claim involved a Newfoundland dog who jumped up at its insured owner's elderly neighbour. This resulted in the neighbour fracturing his hip, leading to an artificial hip replacement. After paying for the hip replacement, compensation for pain and suffering, cost of employing a gardener, and the private

health insurance costs, the overall outlay came to £37,512. However, again, it is worth checking the small print on your policy for any third party exclusions. Dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act are not usually covered by this.

Pet insurance is not only becoming a necessity for the pet owner, but is also a way of ensuring that your animal receives the best care available. As Emma Turton, at Saga, says: "A pet is as valuable as a member of your family. Taking out pet insurance will insure that you will meet its needs."

Direct Line, 0117 946 8833; Equine and Livestock, 01423 331322; Jardine Pet Insurance, 0121 224 6777; Petplan, 0800 282 009; Saga, 0800 99 77 66

COMPARISON OF ANIMAL INSURANCE POLICIES

	Premiums (£ per year)	Higher premium in some areas?	Age limit cat/dog	Limit on vets fees per condition	Minimum excess	OAP discount?	Multiple pets discount?
Jardine Moggies and Mongrels		No		£1250 (per treatment)		No	No
Jardine Paws - Basic cover		No		£2500 (per treatment)		No	No
Jardine Paws - Complete cover		No		£2500 (per treatment)		No	No
Equine & Livestock		No		see 3		No	No
Pet Care Essential		No		£5000		No	No
Pet Care Choice		No		£5000		No	No
Pet Care Superior		No		£5000		No	No
Pet Care Elite		No		£5000		No	No
Petplan		Yes		£4000		Yes	Yes
Cats Choice Cat Plan		Yes		£4000		Yes	Yes
Cats Choice Supercat		Yes		£4000		Yes	Yes
Dog Lovers Economy		Yes		£6000		Yes	Yes
Dog Lovers Standard		Yes		£6000		Yes	Yes
Dog Lovers Supreme		Yes		Unlimited		Yes	Yes
Direct Line		Yes		£2500		No	No
Saga (Over 50s)		No	10-10	£1500	£25	-	-
Saga Essential		No	10-10	£3000	£25	-	-
Saga Super		No	10-10	£3000	£25	-	-

1. Direct Line tailor each policy to the individual pet. Therefore there are no standard premiums.
2. For certain breeds of dog the age limit is 6.
3. No cover for vets fees on this policy.
4. Limit of £5000 for accident treatment only.
5. Limit of £5000 for accident and illness. Unlimited vets fees if premiums paid on a monthly basis.

6. Limit of £5000 for accident and illness including complementary medicine. Unlimited vets fees if premiums paid on a monthly basis.
7. Cover up to amounts shown for any injury, accident, illness or disease including complementary medicine.

Waging war on turpitude

Are you unhappy with the way your occupational pension is being run? The Ombudsman provides free help and advice. By Stephanie Hawthorne

PENSIONS HAVE often been described, rightly, as being among the most important financial issues that we will be called upon to resolve in our lifetimes. In old age, having enough to live on is critical.

That is why upwards of 22 million people are members of occupational pension schemes offered by their employers, from which they hope to benefit at retirement. But what happens if you have a complaint about how your scheme is run?

Stories of "fat cat" lawyers may frighten some victims from seeking justice on the grounds that the fees alone will bankrupt them. But there are alternatives to expensive High Court litigation.

In the pensions arena at least, people need not worry. The Pensions Ombudsman is ideal for people with budget pockets, as the service is free and consumer-friendly. Dr Julian Farrand, the Pensions Ombudsman, investigates and decides complaints and disputes concerning occupational pension schemes. He is independent and acts as an impartial adjudicator.

He certainly has plenty of subjects to work on: there are some 200,000 occupational pension schemes, all of which can face complaints against them

which might then have to be investigated. Despite these huge figures, the number of complaints is relatively small: the annual report for 1997/98 shows that the number of new applications, which are not the same as complaints, is down to 2,840 as against 4,195 in 1996-97 and 5,699 the year before that.

Last year there were 1,388 actual complaints and/or disputes, of which 1,058 were resolved with the Ombudsman's help. This latter figure included 623 formal "determinations", rulings by the Ombudsman after a thorough investigation, compared to 384 the year before.

Primarily the Pensions Ombudsman investigates complaints of maladministration by people responsible for the management of occupational pension schemes. He also investigates disputes of fact or law concerning pensions schemes with trustees or managers or employers (but not other administrators).

Maladministration involves

"bias, neglect, inattention, delay, incompetence, ineptitude, perversity, turpitude, or arbitrariness". It is not enough merely to disagree with a decision: the complainant must have reason to believe that the decision was not properly made

There is no financial limit on potential compensation orders: the record is £168m plus interest

or implemented. Disputes of fact or law usually arise incidentally to a complaint of maladministration without ending a separate investigation. The Pensions Ombudsman cannot investigate a complaint already subject to court proceedings or

complaints about state social security benefits.

When you have a complaint you should first try to sort it out with the person responsible for the management of the pension scheme, using the internal dispute resolution procedure. If you are still not satisfied, you should first ask OPAS (the pensions advisory service) for help.

It is important to act quickly. Complainants must write to the Pensions Ombudsman within three years of the act or omission that they are disputing. If they did not or could not know about the matter at that time, the three years run from the moment that they know or ought to have known. Time spent within the occupational scheme's internal dispute procedure is disregarded, as is time with OPAS.

There is no financial limit on the Pensions Ombudsman's potential compensation orders. The highest-ever award has been £168m plus interest in September 1996, the highest in 1997-98 was £30.7m, again plus interest, in August 1997, both

cases brought by pension scheme members against a bus company they worked for.

Dr Farrand and the nature of his organisation have been the subject of controversy. Robin Ellison - of the legal firm Eversheds - says that while the Ombudsman is a "very talented and able individual", the structure of the organisation "is not designed to cope with tens of millions of pounds. It can result in both sides facing huge costs if they have to appeal."

However, Keith Wallace, of the solicitors Richards Butler, defends Dr Farrand: "High Court justice is a Rolls-Royce where the Ombudsman is a bicycle and is quite unfair for the Rolls-Royce judge to criticise the bicycle's engineering."

Most pension lawyers do not want the system changed, but a few would prefer two members drawn from industry.

One important point to note is that complaints concerning the sale of personal pensions are investigated by the Personal Investment Authority, the front-line financial services regulator, not the Pensions Ombudsman.

The Pensions Ombudsman: 0171-834 9144. Stephanie Hawthorne is editor of Pensions World.

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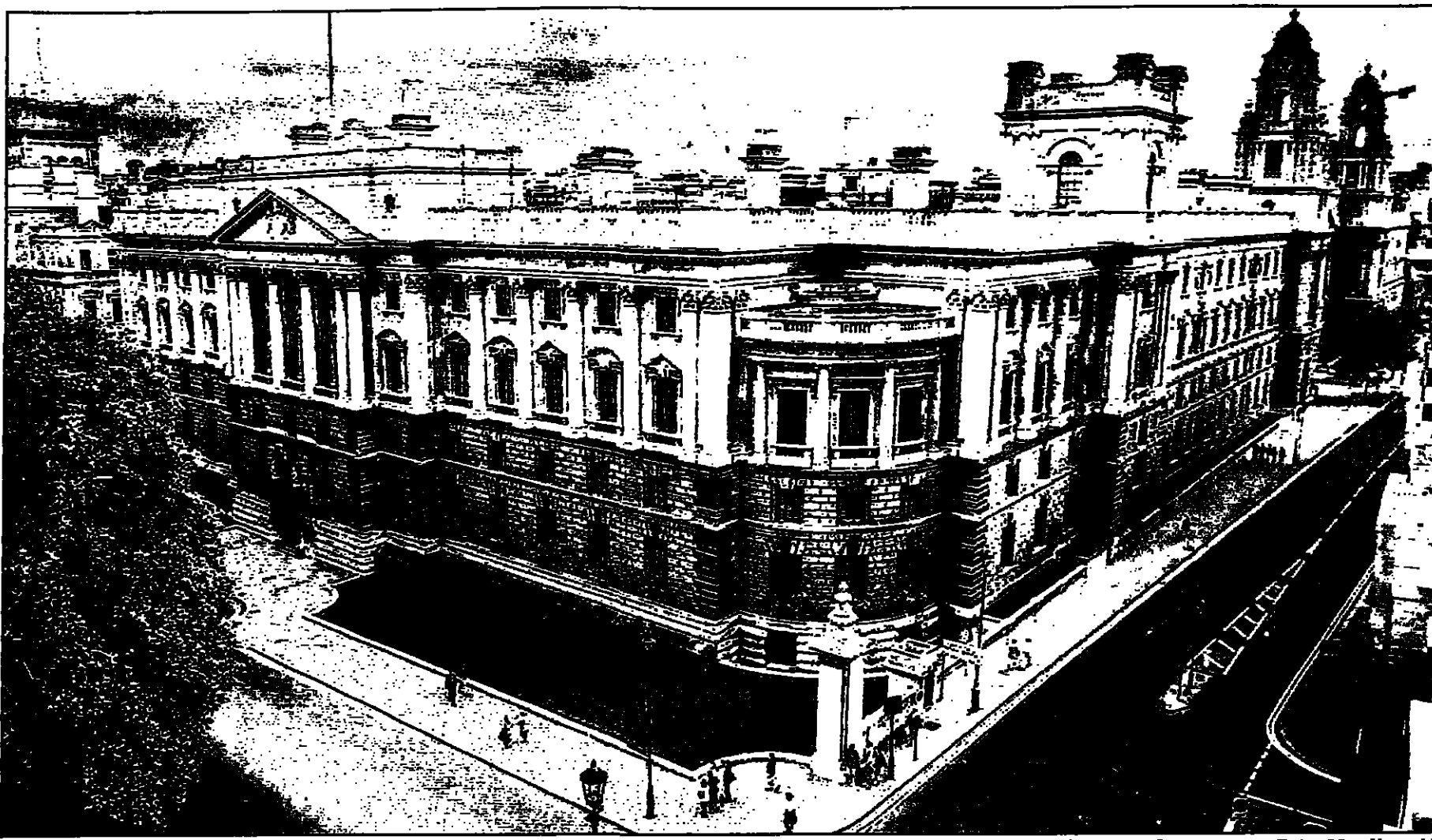
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ZURICH MUNICIPAL

Joining us on the Public Sector

The public sector is using an idea that could save millions in costs. By Paul Gosling

Big savings on the cards



The Treasury is one place where purchasing cards are cutting the costs, and the time, of government departments' buying procedures

Peter Macdarmid

When, last October, the Treasury introduced a procurement card for use in all government departments, it claimed it could save £50m a year. The move followed a highly critical report from the National Audit Office which found that it typically cost £70 in bureaucracy for each order – even, as in one extreme example, to buy a \$9p padlock.

Corporate purchasing cards are common currency in the private sector, and it is surprising that it has taken the public sector so long to catch on. A card – similar to an ordinary credit card – can be used for making purchases in person or over the phone, and each holder is given a personal limit per item, as well as a budget. The holder has no need to obtain authorisation from a more senior official, thereby saving time, reducing the need for central buyers, and eliminating paperwork. It can also improve budgetary control by decentralising the process.

Administration costs are borne by the supplier, who begins to process the transaction when the customer confirms goods have been correctly

received, bringing payment forward by weeks or even months. Suppliers may also be willing to reduce the costs of goods when they are assured of early payment.

Using procurement cards, which are the same as the private sector's corporate purchasing cards, the Treasury expects to save 60 per cent of transactional costs. The next stage – though this may take some time to implement – will be to use electronic commerce for most of Whitehall's buying. Corporations already using a combination of electronic commerce and purchasing cards find they can eliminate as much as 90 per cent of purchasing costs.

The same benefits being achieved by central government can be made by other public bodies, as is being proved by Stirling Council, the first local authority to use purchasing cards. The system was implemented by Stirling's purchasing manager, Russell Green, who says: "I had worked with purchasing cards in a previous job overseas with an American company. When I came to Stirling Council, it seemed ideal for low value purchases in our supplies department."

Working in conjunction with the

Royal Bank of Scotland and Visa, Mr Green proposed using purchasing cards to improve housing maintenance operations.

Initially, the council's internal audit section was concerned at the possibility of fraud, but a procedure was developed that is effective against it. There a limit of £250 on each purchase, and cardholders are only permitted to buy goods that are strictly related to their work.

Visa categorises all goods purchased on its cards, and Stirling's housing maintenance supervisors can only buy items that are categorised as building materials. Buying cameras, meals or an evening out at a nightclub should be impossible under these controls.

Under the old system, a housing maintenance supervisor would visit a tenant to assess the problem, and decide how to repair it. He would then fill in a form requisitioning the goods required; this would go to a buyer, who would raise an order; the order would be given to the supervisor; the supervisor would submit the order; when the goods were received, the supervisor would raise a goods received note, which would be sent to the buyer; the buyer

would match this note to the order to approve payment; the finance department would then issue a cheque. Obtaining goods could take days, mistakes were made, and payment could be slow.

Using a purchasing card, the supervisor can assess the job and phone through an order to the builders' merchants, giving his card number, and arrange to collect the materials in half an hour. He can immediately phone through a request to the tradesmen to go straight to the house to effect an emergency repair. The only paperwork required is that the supervisor fills out a transaction log, which is compared with the monthly Visa account statement. This procedure not only cuts out 60 per cent of the costs where it is used, but saves time for the tenant waiting for repairs.

"The most important thing is that the guy is getting goods to the job much quicker, so he is getting more jobs done," says Russell Green. "The tradesmen are able to do more work, so they are able to earn more bonuses, the operation is more efficient. There is a greater impact than just on the buying department. Under the old system, the

supervisor could spend two or three hours a day just on paperwork. And we still have control, because we know who he is buying from."

After an initial trial with housing maintenance, Stirling Council has approved the more widespread use of its purchasing card. It is now being used in roads maintenance and waste management, will soon be introduced in the catering and cleaning departments, and will eventually be used by all parts of the authority. The card is not appropriate for large value purchases, but it will be used for thousands of low value purchases, where the average cost of each good is £15, but which typically cost between £35 and £75 in paperwork to buy.

Moves to use purchasing cards were given an important boost last month, when Customs and Excise introduced new rules which no longer require paper evidence of the VAT element of goods up to £5,000 in value which are bought using purchase cards.

There are some ideas that are just so good, their users are left to wonder why no one did this years ago. Users of purchasing cards are saying exactly that.

Flirting while the rouble plummets

THE TRADER



THERE'S A lot to be said for not being Russian at the moment. The news footage of harried Moscow rouble-traders looking as if the best choice they'll be offered all day is between suicide and assassination is a useful reminder of how lucky we are here. With all the markets wobbling like jelly, the punters in our section are staying away in droves, so we have time for lunch and chatting, and sorting out our lives.

One main topic of conversation continues to be Norman's barbecue, which is turning out to be a fertile source of jokes. There's Norm's jumper, for instance, practically a joke in itself: one of those striped, multicoloured but subdued numbers that makes any man who wears one look like a Romanian chart-topper, especially if he's got a moustache. No designer gear for Normski, obviously.

Then there's the food: immaculately cooked, as I said before, but unsullied by seasoning. Still, at least we didn't get salmonella. No hangovers, either: our host had laid on low-alcohol beer and lots of lemon barley water, because "you've all got to drive home, and I'm sure you don't want to risk getting stopped by the police". Not something that Rory's ever concerned himself with, but then he's never had a party you had to drive to. Oh, how we missed him on Sunday, when we had to stand around making small talk while sober.

Still, there's one thing to be said for our new boss. Apart from the Sunday summons to the rented mansion in Surrey, he shows little interest in seeing us outside work, a feeling best described as mutual. So no being dragged off to seedy pubs with saggy strippers, no chrome-and-glitz late-night drinking clubs, no swimming-pool-sized Stolly-and-tonics. Norman would rather stay late at the office "getting to grips with things over here" as he puts it, and we'd rather leave early and see our real friends.

As a result, everyone's social life has improved no end. I've managed five dinners in the past week, and I didn't fall asleep during any of them. Just as well, really, since a couple of them were at the sort of trendy eateries

with one-word names where the atmosphere's so vibrant you'd be turfed out for yawning, and two were at the houses of friends I haven't seen for months. And the other was a date.

Despite intense questioning, Laura has found out no more about the event than the last time I had dinner with Olivier, who turned out to be disappointingly less of a Lothario than expected, even if it was because my friend Giles, his colleague, had warned him off. "I thought you were worried about not getting free France-England rugby match tickets off him," I told Olivier over pudding. "Fah!" he answered, with, yes, a shrug (and we wonder why we have national stereotypes). "France are football champions now. Rugby is for yesterday. Besides, I couldn't stop thinking about you."

Well, what could I say? After several dates with chaps who plainly couldn't stop thinking about themselves, comments like that were bound to have an effect. I started to feel fuzzy and happy. Not only that, I realised I could, after all, fancy Olivier more than he fancied himself, despite my first impressions at Giles's dinner party all those months ago. So I'm seeing him for a meal tomorrow evening, and I can't wipe the smile off my face.

Now that I look, everyone in the team seems to be beaming. Marco and Freddie have had a good lunch, Marlene has just booked a weekend away... and Norman is happily perusing the filing system.

My heart sinks. From where I'm sitting, I can tell he's about to hit "Obviously Made-Up CVs" and find himself, so to speak, that will wipe the smile off his face.

I hiss at Laura: "You did remove it, didn't you?"

IN BRIEF

VENTURE CAPITAL trusts, launched to encourage individuals to invest in smaller companies not listed on the Stock Exchange, have raised £535m since October 1995, according to PricewaterhouseCoopers. The 26 VCTs have invested £160m in 312 companies, with the average investment £508,000.

MIKE KINSKI, chief executive of the fast-growing transport group Stagecoach, is calling for a revamp of company annual reports after attracting extensive press comment over a £250,000 "golden hello". In an interview with the latest issue of *Personnel Today* magazine, he blames accounting conventions for giving a misleading impression of his one-off payment. The money was paid to him to offset potential bonuses he would have received had he remained in his old post as chairman of Southern Water. He says it should have been described in that way rather than as performance pay, which he admits cannot be justified as a bonus for three weeks' work.

CITY TRADERS are being warned against taking a "scattergun" approach to sending out CVs. Trish Collins, managing director of the specialist recruitment consultancy the Exchange Consulting Group, says that "CV churning" is a growing practice in the City, with a good percentage of the 500,000 resumes circulating every year sent out by consultancies on an indiscriminate basis. "Unauthorised mail-shooting of CVs often results in the CV hitting the desk of the client three or four times with resultant perceived devaluation of the candidate," says Ms Collins.

UK COMPANIES thinking about doing business overseas should pay particular attention to five key areas that could have an impact on their UK corporation tax exposure, according to accountants Kidsons Impey. Local tax laws – whether to set up a branch or a subsidiary operation; anti-avoidance laws, the financing of overseas operations and transfer pricing are all highlighted in the firm's guide *Doing Business Abroad*.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY Howarth Consulting is holding a seminar on 12 October on modifying information technology and business systems to cope with the introduction of Economic and Monetary Union. Guest speakers at the event include Treasury official Andrew Sheffield, and Charles Brewer, chairman of the Computer Software and Services Association.

WHO SAYS it's a dull life being an accountant? John Hall and John Travers of the Rotherham office of chartered accountants Haines Watts have been appointed administrative receivers of Askrigg Hotels, operator of the hotel and public house known to millions as "The Drover's Arms". The pair are seeking buyers for the historic property in the Yorkshire Dales that featured in the hit BBC series *All Creatures Great and Small*.

Pensions getting into bad company

Accounting directive SSAP24 may sound harmless. But it has resulted in some of Britain's biggest corporations being taken to task for the way they disclose pension details. By Roger Trapp

WHEN IT comes to pensions, it appears that large companies are pretty much like the population at large. That is, they have a tendency to not think about them too much or, when they do, to be rather confused.

This picture emerges from an annual survey of the approaches taken by FTSE 100 companies to complying with SSAP24, the accounting standard relating to the disclosure in company accounts of pensions information. This fifth study by the consulting actuaries Lane Clark & Peacock coincides with the 10th anniversary of the introduction of the standard and concludes that, while the intervening years have seen improvements, it has not succeeded in its overall aim of full pensions disclosure.

Since the Accounting Standards Board (ASB) – the successor body to the group that gave the world SSAP24 – has recently announced proposals for a new standard in this area, it is tempting to believe that this is not such cause for concern. However, Lane Clark & Peacock is concerned that reform may not make things appreciably better.

Bob Scott, a partner in the firm, says that greater prescription over the assumptions that companies can make when calculating their future liabilities should lead to the greater consistency and, hence, comparability that are generally sought by accounts users. But he warns that the expected shift away from actuarial assumptions to the use of market values could create great volatility in accounting for pensions and hence make it difficult to understand what the figures actually mean.

That said, there is not a lot of clarity around at the moment. Some pensions disclosures even defy the understanding of experts in the field such as Mr Scott.

For example, in the report the firm takes to task the 1997 accounts



Safeway is one of just five companies named for adequate pension disclosures

Ken Lemnox

of BT pointing out that the company has the country's largest pension fund, it says that it is looking for BT to take a lead in this area. "In some ways they do," says the survey. "There is a substantial note on pension costs in the financial review, as well as the full note in its normal place at the end of the accounts. They show the pension provision and

the offsetting tax credit very clearly. Unfortunately, the details given on the assumptions used, although very full, are confusing."

And, talking of tax credits, Mr Scott and his fellow Lane Clark & Peacock partner, Richard Abramson, are somewhat nonplussed by the way in which companies have tended to respond to the abolition in

the July 1997 Budget of the Advance Corporation Tax (ACT) credit.

About a third of the companies in the FTSE 100 could not comment in their accounts on the impact of what amounts to a 20 per cent fall in dividend income because they had already reported by the time of the Budget. But of the 63 that issued their accounts after mid-July, a full

38 made no mention of ACT and, says the report, "in most cases, it was clear that no change had been made to their costings to allow for the impact". Of the 25 companies that did refer to the change, most concluded that it had very little effect. In fact, only three companies – BG (formerly British Gas), Royal Bank of Scotland and Williams – indicated a very large cost increase as a result.

Remarkably that "on the face of it, these are very strange results". Lane Clark & Peacock concludes that the relaxed approach has at least something to do with companies subtly altering their actuarial assumptions – just the sort of flexibility that is allowed for in the accounting standard and the very thing that Sir David Tweedie and his colleagues at the ASB abhor.

But, of course, this leads to still greater confusion. As the firm says, it may be that those companies with the weakest, or most optimistic, assumptions will act quickest, while those with stronger, or more conservative, assumptions might be better able to weather the change.

Whatever, the current picture is not a pretty one from the viewpoint of Lane Clark & Peacock. Just five companies – Bass, Centrica (formerly part of British Gas), Reed International, Safeway and Standard Chartered (a client of Lane Clark & Peacock) – receive top scores for their disclosures, while three others – BP, Lucas Varley and Sun Life & Provincial – are picked out for inadequate disclosures.

Since the FTSE 100 companies have funds worth a total of more than £200bn and that providing pensions can amount to as much as a third of pre-tax profits, it is perhaps understandable that Lane Clark & Peacock believes companies should be giving the area a little more attention than appears to be the case at present.

Trouble with the boss? A new course in how to work together may provide the answer. By Helen Jones

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NEW FILMS

GENERAL RELEASE

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98 **TOP** **100**

IF Bacofoil jumpsuits and "Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft" are your bag, then see Jackie Clune's show (right). In "It's Jackie!", the tongue-in-cheek singer runs through camp classics by the likes of Dusty Springfield, Karen Carpenter, Sandy Shaw and Cilla Black. Come and relive the Seventies in all their kitsch glory. *Supper Room, Assembly, Edinburgh* (0131-226 2428) 10.25pm.

Aussie comedians have often thrived on this side of the world – just look at Mark Little, Bob Downe and a certain Barry Humphries. A new wave are now following in their footsteps with *Oz.Dot.Comedy*. The well-regarded trio of Carl Barron, Matt Sutherland and Adam Richard claim to have come over from Sydney and Melbourne "in one suitcase". *Edinburgh Suite, Assembly, Edinburgh* (0131-226 2428) 9.50pm.



CINEMA
WEST END

The Little Mermaid 12.15pm **The Magic Sword: Quest For Camelot** Noon **The X-Files** 1.30pm, 4pm, 5pm, 9.10pm, 11.45pm

